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IN FAIR SILESIA.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF
Karl GUSTAV NIERITZ.

BY
MARY E. IRELAND.



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TO HER

Valued Friend,

MRS. LIZZIE R. HOWELL,

OF PHILADELPHIA,

A FAITHFUL WORKER IN CHURCH AND SUNDAY-SCHOOLS,

THIS

BEAUTIFUL STORY OF GERMAN HOME LIFE

IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED BY

THE TRANSLATOR.

Washington, D. C.

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IN FAIR SILESIA.

CHAPTER I.

LEAVING SCHELLERHAUS.

“**A**RE you tired, Joseph?”

The speaker was a poorly-dressed girl of about eleven years of age, her brother two years older.

They had walked from the village of Schellerhaus, at the foot of the chain of mountains between Silesia and Bohemia, noted for its glass-cutting, and each carried a small bundle of clothing.

“No, Helena, it would take more than a two-hour’s walk to tire me, but I am thinking.”

“What of, Joseph?”

“What else, but leaving our mother and Schellerhaus; I do not expect to be ever so contented again, now we have left our home.”

“I cannot keep from crying, Joseph, when I

think of it," said Helena, her eyes filling with tears, "mother is crying yet, I know."

"But she told us that we would fare better with our uncle in Reichenstein than it was possible with her. We would have bread and butter instead of oatmeal," said Joseph, cheerfully. "Uncle Ruckert carries a silver watch in his pocket, and has a clock that strikes the time in his office."

"Yes, but will he be glad to see us? Mother did not seem sure of it, she only said she hoped he would let us stay with him; and the farther we get from home the more anxious I feel. Suppose he won't have us; what will we do?"

"Oh! I am sure he won't turn us away," comforted Joseph, "mother said he gets good wages as spinning-master in Herr Lauderman's factory, and has no wife or children. She must know that he will take us in, or she wouldn't have sent us."

"She had to send us," persisted Helena, "our piece of oat-cake kept getting smaller, and it distressed our mother, though she tried to keep us from knowing it. I heard her in the night crying, and praying to the dear God for help,

and then she made up her mind to send us away."

"If uncle is only kind and good like mother, we will be all right," commented her brother, "but sometimes brothers and sisters are not one bit alike in disposition."

"Is that the case with us?"

"You have a better disposition than I have, mother always said that; more than this, she says I am so easily influenced that she dreads for me to go where people are not pious, for I would follow in their ways, and by the advice she gave us, I am sure uncle is not religious."

"But she always told us to think the best we could of people, and if uncle is wicked, we are old enough to know better than to copy after him."

"She seemed afraid that he would not want us, and she was nearly crying all the time she was writing that long, kind letter to him. I think the letter and the beautiful cut-glass cup with his and mother's names upon it will please him, and he cannot help liking the purse you knit for him; the silk in it cost five groschen."

“If he will only keep us until I can get a place as nurse for children, and you get something to do where you can go to school. But look, Joseph, there is the church steeple of Warmbrunn; when we get there we are only three miles from Reichenstein, mother said, and she said we could stop there a little while.”

It was summer, in the height of the bathing season at Warmbrunn, and the place was filled with guests, gay parties of apparently care-free people, walking and driving out, chatting merrily, as if there was not such things as poverty and trouble in the world. Booths containing toys, sweetmeats and fruits were dotted thickly about, and street peddlers were offering their wares, which were temptingly displayed in baskets and upon trays.

“Just look at the money-purses, Joseph,” said Helena, “they are far prettier than the one I knit for uncle, I am sure if he sees these he won’t be pleased with mine.”

“But, sister, he will know that you could not afford to buy silver, and gilt-beads and rings; he ought to be pleased with it because

you knit it and gave it to him, not for its price."

"Yes, but mine looks so poor beside these, and I thought it so beautiful before we left Schellerhaus."

"But these are only for rich people who have gold to put in them; uncle is better off than we are, but I am sure one that is made for silver and copper will suit him much better. Silver and gold beads tarnish and rust if not carefully used. Besides, the silk is so fine in these purses that silver or copper would cut through and be lost, so you see the strong, coarse silk you used is far better for uncle."

Helena was comforted by this wise reasoning, and her dissatisfaction was forgotten in viewing a tray of ribbons and embroideries, while Joseph was equally delighted with a large cage of canaries that were singing merrily, happily unconscious that they might be sold to some girl or boy who would neglect the helpless little creatures, and allow them to suffer for food or drink, or from heat or cold.

At length they came to a booth where books and pictures were sold, and Joseph was so

charmed that he could not take his eyes away from them, until the ill-tempered salesman brought his hand down roughly upon the shoulder of the startled boy.

“Stand back, country blockhead!” said he, “can’t you see you are keeping buyers away?”

Joseph stepped back quickly, and he and Helena hurried away. This man was the first rude person they had met upon their travels, and they were not sorry to part from him; but, fortunately, they determined to forget annoyances in the many pleasant incidents constantly passing before them, and the next booth they stopped to inspect contained white and colored glassware of many beautiful designs.

It was now Joseph’s turn to be somewhat dissatisfied with the present they were taking to their uncle.

Oh! Helena, look at the splendid pitchers and cups; what will uncle think of the poor little affair we all thought so beautiful?”

At that moment a fashionably-dressed lady stepped to the stand and priced a vase for flowers.

“Seven dollars, lady, and very cheap at that

price," said the salesman, politely, for like other naturally coarse-minded people he let his manners suit the occasion, and had ordered the children to stand back in the same tone adopted by the book-seller.

"Seven dollars for a vase to hold flowers!" said Helena, in astonishment, "when poor mother, with her steadiest work, can only make twenty, or, at most, twenty-two groschens a week, out of which must come the rent of her home and the support of her two children." But both agreed that the vase was very beautiful, and resolving not to be cast down by the contrast between it and the present for their uncle, they passed on. The strains of sweet music from a string-band restored their spirits, and they hurried to the spot where it was stationed.

Their knowledge of music was limited to the performance of the old schoolmaster of Schellerhaus upon the violin, and that of a glass-cutter who played a few airs upon the flute. Besides these the only sounds that they had heard were the shepherd's horn and the night watchman's whistle. Therefore, the concert,

which was no novelty to the guests at Warmbrunn, was appreciated with open-mouthed delight by these simple-minded mountain children, who listened without speaking a word until the sounds died away. It is doubtful if they would have thought of moving on had not the music ceased, but that fact recalled to their minds that they had three miles yet to walk; so they left the attractive place, talking as they went of the curious instruments and the skill with which they were handled

“I am hungry and tired,” said Helena; “we had something left of our dinner; let us sit down somewhere and eat it.”

“I see a brook and shade further on; let us rest there,” replied Joseph; and, still talking of the wonders of Warmbrunn, they reached a shady bank, where they ate the remainder of the simple fare that their mother had provided.

They had just finished, and had taken a refreshing drink of cool water from the brook, when they heard the sound of wheels, and, glancing back toward the road, they saw a fine carriage, in which sat a lady, a boy, and a girl.

A sullen-looking coachman drove the pair of handsome horses, but the footman's seat back of the carriage was empty.

"Run, Lenchen!" cried Joseph, catching her hand; "we can jump up on the footman's seat and ride part of the way."

They soon caught up with the carriage, which was slowly ascending a hill, sprang up without any trouble, and were seated comfortably, to their great delight, and without any thought that they were seen. The coachman waited until the carriage reached the top of the hill, when, rising from the box, he gave a cut with his whip across the top of the carriage. Joseph received it on the back of his neck, and the end of the lash struck Helena upon the cheek. A cry went up from the startled children, and they dropped quickly to the ground.

"What do you think of that?" said Joseph, as they saw the carriage rolling rapidly away.

"I think the driver struck as if he wished to hurt us," was her reply, as she rubbed her tingling cheek.

"We could always ride in an empty wood-

cart or sand-wagon at home," said Joseph. "What would our mother say if she knew how we were treated?"

"It would make her sorry, so we will not tell her; she has enough trouble about us."

"Your cheek is as red as fire where the lash hit you."

"And your neck has a red welt upon it; does it smart, Joseph?"

"I should say it does. I am glad I have not a temper like that man."

"You may well say that," remarked a half-grown boy, who had been resting under the shade of a great tree near the roadside. "I saw him stand to strike you, and I thought to myself, 'Like master, like man.' I know who the people in the carriage are, for I worked in their factory, and saw them often: they are the wife and son and daughter of Herr Laudermann, of Reichenstein. He owns a cloth-mill, and has gotten rich by oppressing his work-people. Everybody dislikes him, and all say that his riches will bring no blessing to him."

"Oh, dear!" said Helena, half-aloud.

"Does your cheek pain you?" inquired the

boy. "When we reach the next stream you can bathe it; that will ease the pain."

"My sister is not troubled about that," said Joseph, "but we are on our way to Reichenstein to stay with the brother of our mother, who is spinning-master in Herr Laudermann's factory; and she is sorry to know that the mill-owner is a person of that kind, for we both hope to get work in his factory."

"What is your name?"

"Joseph Eckhardt, and my sister's name is Helena."

"Was your mother too poor to keep you at home?"

"Yes, she thought we could live better if we came here."

"Well, I am sorry for you. Laudermann is greedy and hard-hearted, and your Uncle Ruckert is rough-tempered and drinks too much beer. I am sorry if I have discouraged you, but you might as well know the truth first as last. But my main reason for telling you is, that I wish to tell you of somebody in Reichenstein who will be a good friend to you if you need a friend, and I am pretty sure you will.

His name is Herr Caspar Krown, and he is the schoolmaster of Reichenstein. He has a good-sized house, and his school is in one part of it. He is a good Christian, helps everybody who needs help, and everybody loves him and respects his opinions. And now our roads part here. Good-bye, and keep up good hearts."

The boy trudged away, and Helena burst into tears.

"Oh, if mother had known all this she would never have let us come," sobbed she.

"Oh, Lenchen, we are tired and hungry, and all looks gloomy to us. Maybe uncle will be kind and if we find that we cannot live with him, we can go back to Schellerhaus. Mother said it might be hard for us at first, but that, if we trust in God, all would come out right."

"But every person was kind to us in Schellerhaus," said Helena. "The only trouble we had was, that there was nothing for us to do to earn money, and it worried mother that she could not earn enough to keep us in food and clothes. I wish that we were at home again. I am so tired, I feel that I cannot walk any further."

“But we must, Helena; we cannot sleep on the ground.”

This thought put new energy into the girl; she walked faster, and in a short time they came in sight of a great building with many windows and a tall chimney. They knew that it was the factory; and while they gazed a bell rang, then they heard a shrill whistle, and men, women, boys, and girls swarmed through the doors, and hurried to their homes.

Not far from the factory was a handsome dwelling with beautiful grounds, and the children were right in believing it to be the home of Herr Laudermann. The carriage that they had seen was at the gate, and the boy Adolph was feeding the horses with blades of grass that he plucked from the lawn.

“Does the spinning-master Ruckert live here and work in this factory?” inquired Joseph of a boy who was passing him on his way to his home.

“Yes!”

“Is he within, and can I see him?”

“He is within, but whether you can see him is another question; it will be just as he chooses.

You go up these steps, turn to the right, and you will see a door with "Office" over it. You can knock, and maybe he will let you in, and maybe he won't."

With heavy hearts the children followed these directions, and knocked timidly at the office-door, then waited to be asked to enter.

CHAPTER II.

UNCLE RUCKERT.

ACCUSTOMED to the pure mountain air of Schellerhaus, the smell of the factory was extremely disagreeable to Helena and Joseph, but they had a much greater concern upon their minds, that being the meeting with their uncle, and all other annoyances were trifles.

There was no response to Joseph's knock, so Helena doubled her fist and gave several thumps upon the door. Then Joseph knocked again, and after waiting a few minutes they opened the door and went in, finding no one there.

The office faced the road and the setting sun, was large, cheerful and in perfect order, but was not so pleasant to the children as the poor little home of their mother. Canaries, evidently well cared for, hung in gilded cages in the broad windows, a desk with two stools stood between them, a wide sofa used as a

sleeping place, and having a snow-white pillow and spread, was at the back of the room, a table covered with pamphlets and other papers was in the centre, and in one corner a clock in a tall, polished case.

The children had time to take note of all these things, and to begin to feel anxious, when a step was heard in the corridor, the door opened, and a thick-set, burley looking, red-faced man came in.

He stopped at the door and looked at the children in surprise.

"Who are you?" inquired he, "and what are you doing in my office?"

Joseph tried to explain, but words failed him, and taking his mother's letter from his pocket he put it in his uncle's hand, who opened and read it, his face growing darker and more forbidding with each line. When finished, he threw it angrily upon the table.

"My sister took a great deal upon herself when she sent her two children to me to provide for. I have no use for you and will not have the bother; you must go straight back to Schellerhaus."

Herr Ruckert went to the window and looked out, his anger increasing as he considered the affair, while the children stood looking at each other, not knowing what to say or do.

At length Helena thought of the glass cup which her mother had sent, and taking it from the bundle, she gave it into Joseph's hand to present.

"Uncle," said he, "our mother sent you this present; see it has her name and yours upon it; she sent it with her love."

"And here is a purse I knit for you, Uncle Ruckert, it is good and strong, and will hold silver and copper."

"What do I want of such trifles?" exclaimed Ruckert, contemptuously, "all I want is for you to leave here as quickly as possible."

"Let us go, Helena, he won't let us stay," said Joseph, in a low tone.

"Where shall we go? It is too late to walk back to our home; besides, I am almost sick for rest, and we would have no place to sleep."

"It is yet summer, and not cold; we can sleep near a straw stack. But wait, Lenchen.

What is the name of the person that the boy told us to call upon if we needed a friend? It was something about a king, but I don't remember what it was."

"I remember," replied his sister, cheerfully; "it was Krown; the boy said he is a school-master. Let us go to him."

At these words Ruckert turned quickly from the window and came to them.

"What is Krown to you?" said he, roughly. "What do you want of him?"

"We were told by one who knows him that he is liked by everybody, and that he helps all who need help, because he is a good Christian. We are in trouble and need help, so we are going to him."

"Krown has no business to get mixed up with this," said Ruckert, flushing angrily; "he is a person I despise; you shall not go to him."

"Put the cup and purse in the bundle, Helena; we must go somewhere before it is night," said Joseph.

"Wait, don't be in such a rush, until I see what I can do. Have you had any supper?" inquired Ruckert, harshly.

The children hesitated; then Helena, at a nod from Joseph, spoke:

“Our mother gave us an oat-meal cake to eat on the way: we ate the last of it after we left Warmbrunn.”

With a frown of impatience, their uncle took a loaf of bread from a box in one corner, cut off two thick slices, and, putting with each a piece of cheese, gave it to them without a word.

“Can we have a drink, uncle? We are very thirsty,” quoth Helena.

“I wonder what next you will ask for. Do you suppose that I have nothing else to do but to wait upon you? There is a tank in that corner, and a cup beside it; go and help yourselves.”

They went, but soon came back to the sofa near the desk, where their uncle had taken a seat.

“Did you drink?” questioned he.

“No; it is water we want; that is beer.”

“Well, what is the matter with beer?”

“Our mother does not allow us to drink it.”

“Why not? Is she trying to set you up as being better than other people?”

Joseph said nothing, but Helena spoke up bravely:

"If you will be so good as to tell us where to get water, we will not trouble you any more, uncle."

"There is a pump out in the mill-yard, and here is a pitcher. Now let me have a little peace, will you?"

A few minutes later Joseph came in with a pitcher of pure, cool water, and Ruckert, handing them two tin cups, returned to his writing.

God had blessed these children with cheerful, self-reliant dispositions, and their mother had taught them to take the brightest possible view of what life offered. So, sitting by each other upon the sofa, they forgot all discomfort caused by Ruckert's rudeness, and enjoyed the good bread and cheese as only those can to whom such fare is a luxury.

They had not finished when Ruckert arose, and going to the beer can, drank a quantity that astonished the children, then went out into the factory yard where he met the mill-owner's coachman.

"Hans," said he, "who do you think I have

quartered upon me? Who, but the two children of my sister; I who have no home except the factory, and have no liking for children. I don't know where to put them for even the one night they will have to stay. You know I sleep in the office on the sofa, will you let them sleep in the stable upon the hay?"

"I would like to oblige you, Ruckert, but it would put me out of my place. Herr Laudermann would discharge me; he wouldn't let man, woman or child sleep in his out-buildings, fearing they had matches about them and would set the place on fire."

"These children could be searched," said Ruckert, "though I am sure they have no matches about them. It would be a great favor to me to get a place for them to sleep."

"It won't be in the stables," replied Hans, stoutly, "certainly there is some place in the factory to put them."

"My sister deserves a beating for sending her children to worry the life out of me. They have walked all the way from Schellerhaus since morning."

"A boy and a girl?" questioned the coach-

man," I suspect they are the very children that jumped up on the footman's board, and I gave them a stroke from my whip which sent them off faster than they came. Did they tell you of it?"

"No, but the girl has a red mark on her cheek and the boy a welt on the back of his neck, no doubt they are the ones; you didn't give them any more than they deserved, and I wish it had scared them off from coming here."

He returned to the office, and set about trying to arrange places for his unwelcome guests, and not all their evident attempts to conciliate him could chase away his displeasure. He collected several sacks of wool which were standing about and arranged them in a corner of his office for Joseph, and placed several more in an adjoining room for Helena, gave each an old blanket, and told them to be in bed and out of the way before he came back, with which advice he left the office.

"If our mother could know how uncle received us, wouldn't she worry?" said Helena, as she arose to go to the place allotted her.

"She stands a fair chance of knowing very

soon, for I think uncle is meaning to send us back to Schellerhaus in the morning," replied the brother.

"Poor mother will be so worried, for she cannot give us the food that she says we ought to have to make us grow strong."

"Well, we will stay here as long as we can, I for one am thankful that he did not turn us out to-night. More than that, we have schoolmaster Krown."

"Oh! yes; I almost forgot that; if uncle says we must leave here we will go to see him. Oh! I am so glad we know of him. Good-night, Joseph, I am so sleepy I can scarcely keep my eyes open."

"I could drop down anywhere and sleep," answered her brother, "and these wool sacks are certainly soft and comfortable. Good-night, Lenchen, mother told us not to forget our prayers."

CHAPTER III.

THEY TAKE A WALK.

JOSEPH was awakened the next morning by a clashing, rolling, rumbling sound, which alarmed him so much that he sprang from his bed and ran to Helena's door to awaken her, thinking that the factory was on fire.

His Uncle Ruckert had left the office, and the children had no one to ask as to the terrible noise. They dressed hastily, and went to the place from whence the most of it seemed to proceed, opened a door, and saw a huge black object in what seemed to them the bottomless pit, and which shook the floor upon which they were standing, and, in truth, the whole factory resounded with the noise of machinery which it was keeping in motion.

That which they had thought to be a great fire was only the factory, set, several hours before, in working order for the day; and, closing the office-door, they went out in search of their uncle. They met many men and women with

baskets of wool, most of which was already spun, and at length they saw the spinning-master.

“Well, sleepy-heads!” said he, “I suppose you would have slept until noon if you had not gotten hungry. What brings you out here? Are you hunting your breakfast?”

“We were frightened at the noise; we thought that the factory was on fire,” said Joseph.

“Go back to the office, and I will give you something to eat.”

The children obeyed, and in a few minutes the spinning-master, having finished his duties for the time, which had called him from his office, came in, gave them their allowance of bread and cheese, and pointed to the water-can.

“Can you read and write?” questioned he of Joseph, when their breakfast was finished.

“Yes; I am twelve years old and a few months over, and have been to school for four years.”

“Good!” responded Ruckert. “Here is a column that I wish you to add up, and here is pen, paper, and ruler. Now do it right, or you

will be sorry for it. And the girl, what can you do?" turning to Helena.

"I can sew, and spin flax, and cook."

"Cook!" echoed her uncle, sneeringly; "I suppose all that amounts to is the making of gruel, and boiling potatoes in their jackets. But I will see what you can do at sewing. Here is a vest that needs mending and several buttons; I expect you to do it well, and to darn these stockings neatly; but first give the canaries their seed and fill their cups with fresh water. I will keep you both for two days, although I do not thank your mother for putting two such millstones about my neck."

These words dampened the gratitude that the children had felt for the good bread and cheese; they looked at each other and remained silent; and Ruckert, locking the desk as though afraid to trust them so long with its contents, left the room.

"The poor birds, how shamefully they are treated!" said Lenchen, glancing at the neglected cages. "I am glad he told me to attend to them, for it worries me to see the helpless little things trying to take their baths

in their drinking cups, in which there is but a few drops of water, anything but fresh. How can they be happy and sing in such a place?"

While talking she was busily engaged in preparing a cage for thorough cleansing. The work for all the birds was done thoroughly, fresh water and seed given, then taking a piece of paper in her hand she went out for the fine, white sand she had seen the evening before near the pump.

She had secured it, when hearing a pleasant voice address her, she turned, and saw the girl whom she had noticed in the carriage the day before, the daughter of Herr Laudermann. She had a handsome glass pitcher in her hand, and passing it to Helena, asked her to fill it.

"Oh! it came near being broken," said Helena, in a startled tone, as she loosed her grasp upon it too soon when passing it filled to the girl, who fortunately caught it, I would have been very sorry, for it is so beautiful."

"We have far prettier ones than this, and yesterday we bought a lot of glassware at Warmbrunn, so there was no need for you to

turn pale with fright thinking you were letting this one fall. What is your name? Mine is Toska Laudermann, and what made that red mark on your cheek?"

"Helena Eckhardt, and your coachman struck me with his whip."

"Was it you who got up behind our carriage yesterday?" inquired Toska, reddening. "It was my brother Adolph's fault, for he told Hans you were there. Was it your brother who was with you, and did he get hurt?"

"Yes, it was my brother, and he has a welt on the back of his neck."

"Where do you live?"

"In Schellerhaus, up in the mountains."

"Are you and your brother to work in our factory?"

"No, we are only to visit our Uncle Ruckert; we are to go back in two days."

"Do you want to go?"

"No, we would rather stay."

"Who makes you go?"

"Our uncle; he will not keep us, although our mother wrote to him that she could not earn enough to keep us in clothes and food."

“I never heard of such an uncle as that, if —”

“Toska, why don't you come with the water,” cried a woman's voice from the front door of the dwelling.

Toska hurried away, and Helena went into the office with the sand, supplied each cage, then set down to the mending.

“Dear, dear!” said she after inspecting the hose, “it is no use trying to mend these, the heels are so worn. I will knit new ones in, but first will wash them; I wish I had a piece of soap, but will have to wait until uncle comes back.”

“There is a little piece over there by the beer tank, why not use that?” suggested Joseph.

Helena was quick to avail herself of this; the stockings were washed and put in the sun, and she turned her attention to the rest, while Joseph, who had counted over his column several times, tried it once more to see if the result would be the same, and was satisfied that it was correct.

“I would like to know what we are to have for dinner,” remarked Helena, as her needle

flew in and out; "I see no kitchen, nor stove, nor fire, nor pans; neither do I see potatoes, nor anything else to eat, and I am getting hungry. What do you think about it, Joseph?"

"I think that I am nearly starved; but it is not the first time, and we made no fuss about it, either."

At that moment a shrill whistle sounded through the great factory, the signal for the noon rest and dinner, and their uncle entered the office. His first glance was at the canaries, but whether he noticed the improved condition of the cages or not, Helena could not tell. He turned from them to the chest, took from it a cloth, and spread it upon the table, from which he had removed papers and books, and had scarcely finished putting on plate, knife, and fork, when a woman came in with a basket, in which was his dinner, and a pitcher of water. She cast a look of surprise upon the children, which they returned with interest, as she put upon the table a piece of fat pork, a dish of potatoes, and six dumplings. Then she left the office.

Ruckert put a small slice of the meat, a po-

tato, and a dumpling upon a plate for each of the children, to which he added a small piece of bread.

“Now go where you please to eat, but not here,” he said. “I want this hour to myself, and will not be disturbed. And another thing I wish you to remember, and that is, not to go near the school-house of Caspar Krown in the village. If I hear of that, or hear of his name being spoken by you, you will find yourselves sent back to Schellerhaus.”

The children took the plates, and found a shaded place back of the factory, where they sat down to eat.

“It is real good,” commented Joseph. “If mother was with us it would taste much better. I could eat more if I had it; couldn’t you Helena?”

His sister nodded her head in the affirmative, and they sat for a while in silence.

“I wonder why uncle doesn’t want us to see the schoolmaster,” said she. “He appears to be afraid of him.”

“And isn’t it strange, Helena, that it is owing to a boy that we have never seen but once, and

to a man that we have never seen at all, that we are not sent back to Schellerhaus?"

"If we had not met the boy, we would not have heard of Herr Krown," remarked his sister. "I am glad that we met him."

"Now that our dinner is finished, we might take a walk and look about us. We have a good half-hour, and can see a good deal in that time. Stick the plates and other things in the bushes, and let us go."

"No, somebody might take them, and uncle would be angry. I will take them back and put them by the office-door."

This was quickly done, and they set out upon their walk. The dwelling of Herr Laudermann was the first place inspected, and they stood at the garden-fence, looking at the flowers and at the summer-house covered with vines; then they walked on, and were in Reichenstein almost before they knew it. The church with its tower, the white marble monuments in the church-yard, and the small, but neat dwellings of the weavers, were all objects of interest.

At length they came to a large house, over the door of which were the words "C. Krown,

Schoolmaster," and the children halted, and looked at each other in joyous surprise.

Without intending to disobey their uncle, they had come to the very place that they had been forbidden to come, and through the clear windows they could see desks and benches, all empty, for it was noon, and the children had gone home to dinner.

They wandered on until they reached a hedge at the back of the garden, where they heard the sound of a man's voice, cheery and pleasant, which did them good.

"See, dear Lenchen, how well our trees are bearing; I have a full basket of pears already."

A break in the hedge gave the children a chance to peep through, and they saw the schoolmaster upon a step-ladder, with his wife standing by.

"Oh! what a pretty lady!" whispered Helena "Doesn't she look good and kind?"

"So does the schoolmaster," replied Joseph; "very different from our uncle."

"Oh, Caspar, dear," said the lady, "two of the prettiest pears fell on the other side of the hedge. What a pity!"

"But some one will get them, and, I hope, will enjoy them."

Helena had seen them fall, and, picking them up, she reached them through the hedge.

"Thank you, little one," said Frau Krown; "keep them; we give them to you willingly. I think you are strangers in Reichenstein; I do not remember having seen you."

"No, you have never before seen us," replied Helena; then, dreading to be further questioned, she thanked the lady for the pears, and they hurried away.

"Oh, Joseph," said she, as they bent their steps toward the factory, "what would uncle say if he knew that we had seen and talked with Frau Krown? I feel as Eve must have felt when she ate the apple that she was forbidden to touch."

"But I don't see how we are to keep from seeing Schoolmaster Krown," said Joseph; "if we stay here, we must go to the village sometimes, and cannot help meeting him."

"I cannot feel as sorry as I ought; I am glad that I saw them, for uncle made me curious to see what they would do and say, and

how they looked. I like them both so much, and their cool, pretty house with the great linden shading it; and their great garden with flowers and vegetables does look so different from the factory. I wish that we could live there."

"You might as well wish for the moon, Lenchen," replied her brother, as they reached the steps of the factory just in time to go in with the others.

CHAPTER IV.

VISIT TO THE PROPRIETOR.

WHEN the factory bell sounded at six o'clock the next morning, the children were up and dressed and waiting in the office for their uncle.

He came in, spoke gruffly to them, and gave them their breakfast.

"I have concluded to keep you awhile," said he, when they finished, "but only upon condition that you work, and are obedient. Do you promise?"

"Oh, yes; willingly!" said both.

"I am going to give you some real work," continued Ruckert; "what you did yesterday was only child's play. I have spoken to Herr Laudermann, and he is willing that you should work in the factory; so come with me."

The children followed, and were led to a large hall where were many women and girls standing before machinery which was putting the fine strands of cotton wool upon spools.

"Rose," said Ruckert, to a slender, pale little girl, "I wish you to teach my niece to spin; and you, Helena, pay attention to what she says, for no work can be done right without attention. Come, Joseph, follow me."

Two stories higher they reached another long room, where more than fifty work-people were beating the dust from cotton wool, and Joseph was given a place among them. The hard exercise was not more trying to him than the noise which almost deafened him, and when dinner-time came he was almost exhausted with the unaccustomed exertion, and his arms were stiff and sore.

Lenchen was weary of standing, and wondered how she would be able to endure it day after day.

The next morning her uncle came and stood for a moment watching her at work.

"Do you understand how to spin well?" inquired he, brusquely.

"Yes, uncle, it was very easy to learn."

"Can you spin as well as Rose? Do you think she can, Rose?" turning to the girl.

"Yes, I never saw any one learn so quickly."

"I was expecting that, and as she can manage the machine as well as you, I do not need your services any longer."

"Oh, Herr Ruckert!" cried she, clasping her hands in distress, while her thin face turned paler than before, "think of my poor, sickly mother; how can we live if I don't earn something?"

"That is not my business," replied the spinning-master, coldly, "we have too many hands, now, some one will have to go, and it might as well be you as anybody."

"But I have always worked faithfully, and you were satisfied with my work. Frau Hemple, who stands next to me, will tell you that I never neglect the spindles a moment."

"No, there is, I am sure, no one in the factory who is more faithful," said the woman.

"But that is not the question," said Herr Ruckert, impatiently. "Herr Laudermann told me to discharge some one to make room for Helena, and it might as well be Rose as any one, unless you prefer to give up your place to her," he continued, looking at Frau Hemple, "if not, attend to your own affairs, and don't meddle with what doesn't concern you."

Lenchen's heart went out in pity to the girl whose place she had innocently usurped, and, with tears in her eyes, she turned to the spinning-master.

"Oh, uncle, please do not let me crowd her out of her place. I will do any work that you give me, even if much harder, if you will let her stay. She has told me all her troubles, and I feel so sorry for her. Please speak to Herr Laudermann, and ask if she can stay."

"Silence!" cried Ruckert, sternly. "What does an ignorant mountain girl know of the business of a great factory?" And he turned from them and went to his office.

"Oh! my poor mother!" cried Rose, as tears rolled down her pale cheeks, "how can I tell her this bad news?"

Like an inspiration it came into Lenchen's mind what the boy had told her and Joseph in case trouble came their way, and she passed on the advice to one who sorely needed it.

"Do you know Schoolmaster Krown? He is a good man, and will help anybody that needs help."

Rose grasped eagerly at this consolation.

"Oh, yes," said she; "if anybody can help us, it is Schoolmaster Krown."

"Uncle is a hard-hearted man," said Helena to herself when Rose left the room. "He did not seem to care that the poor sick mother would have nothing to live on."

The next day Herr Ruckert told the children that he wished to speak to them at noon; so, as soon as their simple meal was finished, they went to him in his office.

"The mill-owner has not as yet seen you," said he, gruffly, "and he told me to send you up to his house at a little after twelve. I want you to make him think as well of you as you can, for if he won't have you, there is nothing else to do but to send you back to Schellerhaus."

"What do you wish us to do, uncle, to make him like us?" questioned Helena.

"Wash your hands and faces, brush your hair smoothly, and when he speaks to you answer promptly and clearly. There is nothing that he hates like mumbling. Now go, and do as I tell you, and be as quick as you can."

This visit, the children were quite sure, would

not be any pleasure, and perhaps no advantage to them. They had, so far, heard no good word for the mill-owner; but instead, only hints, and sometimes complaints of his oppression and tyranny; and their first meeting with him convinced them that what they had heard was true.

Following their uncle's commands, they went to the house, and were admitted by a servant, and taken past a richly-furnished reception-room to the mill-owner's office. They found him seated at a long table, surrounded by packages of cotton and linen balls ready for weaving; and with him were several weavers, the old book-keeper, and two packers. Some of the weavers had come for yarn; others had brought home the finished work, which they unwrapped with trembling hands, knowing that, according to custom, he would find fault with it and reduce the price.

"But I can scarcely support my family when I get full price," said the weaver who first exhibited his work and met with censure; "if you take off part, we will starve."

"If what I give you is not enough for poor

work, try some other employer," replied the mill-owner, coldly. "I will pay you no more."

"But I would lose time searching for another place, and the cost of moving would take what little I have. Give me full price for my work, and I will be satisfied, even if other mill-owners give more."

"Other employers can afford to give more, because they have modern machinery, which saves them from employing so many hands. You ought to thank me for keeping my old machinery, and thus giving employment to weavers, instead of finding fault with me for reducing your wages for faulty work. Now go; I have said what I mean, and I mean what I say."

"Well," said one of the weavers to another, as they passed out, "what can we do but stay with him? We are not able to leave him to find another place."

In the meantime Herr Laudermann had turned to the children, and was, as it appeared, satisfied with his first sight of them.

"You are Ruckert's sister's children, he tells me," he remarked. "Our coachman welcomed

you with his carriage-whip. That should be a warning to you not to trespass upon other people's property. You write a tolerable hand," continued he, turning to Joseph, "and if you continue to improve, you may some day sit at this desk as my secretary."

The eyes of the boy brightened, and he turned to Helena, with the hope that there would be also a good word for her.

"Ruckert tells me that you have learned to attend to the spinning-machine," said Herr Laudermann to her. "So long as you do well you will be permitted to stay; when you grow careless you will have to go back to Schellerhaus."

He waved his hand toward the door, and the children, taking the hint, left the office and returned with light hearts to their work.

"There is one thing I would like to know," said Joseph, when they had reached the entrance to the factory, "and that is, when we are to start to school. Uncle doesn't say anything about it, and if he doesn't mention it soon, I will ask him."

"Oh, no," replied Helena, anxiously; "I have

seen enough of him to know that he does not like to be questioned. Let us wait and see what he will do about it.

The week drew on to the end, and nothing was said, and the children were glad that their mother did not know that they were learning nothing, one of her chief reasons for being willing to have them leave her having been the hope of their being sent to a good school.

On Monday morning of the next week their uncle mentioned the subject while they were at breakfast.

"Now that it has been settled that you are to stay here, you must go to school; and when you hear the factory whistle at six o'clock this evening, you must go to room number 17, where there will be a teacher to hear your lessons."

"What are we to do for books, uncle?" said Lenchen, briskly.

"You have no need to concern yourself about that part of it," said he, frowningly; "the teacher will attend to that."

"I am sorry that the teaching is to be done here instead of at school," said Joseph, when alone with his sister. "It won't seem like go-

ing to school if we have to learn in this old factory."

"But we will see Herr Krown; I am glad of that," said Helena.

Work was but play that day, they looked forward to the evening with so much pleasure; and when the whistle sounded, they hurried to number 17, where, with about forty others, all factory children, they awaited the appearance of the teacher.

A quarter of an hour passed, and the children laughed and romped, the noise getting pretty loud, when a tall, thin young man entered and commanded silence. He swung a rattan in his hand, and looked as if it would be a great pleasure to use it.

Silence immediately followed, and he gave out a verse for them to sing, after which he commenced the instruction for the evening.

To the great disappointment of the Eckhardt children, they found that the teacher was not Schoolmaster Krown, but the tutor of the mill-owner's children, Herr Lehman by name. He was not at all amiable, and the impatience he was obliged to restrain when teaching Adolph

and Toska was indulged freely with the factory children. He was weary from his day of teaching, and they from their long hours of work, some of the younger children dropping asleep within reach of the teacher's long arm and heavy hand. At eight o'clock it was a joy to all to hear the bell which gave them liberty, and they lost no time in hurrying off to their homes and their beds.

Joseph and Helena appreciated this chance for learning, as well as the other advantages that they had never before enjoyed. They had better food, and more of it, and their uncle kept them comfortably clothed, though grumbling over the expense of their keep, and threatening, with every little offence, to send them back to Schellerhaus. No matter how good and obedient they were, they could not win a kind word from him, nor any evidence that he looked upon them in any light except as a burden.

They missed the free, out-of-door life that they had led in their mountain home; they longed for the woods, the streams, the wild berries and nuts; and, more than all, they longed for the presence of their kind, loving mother.

CHAPTER V.

THE REVOLVING SHAFT.

JOSEPH and Lenchen had been six weeks in Reichenstein, and in all that time they had not had one holiday or part of a one, but worked steadily as any of the other employees of the factory.

One day they were taking their mid-day meal under the shade of the large tree back of the factory, when they heard the cry, "Juniper berries! juniper berries! blackberries! blackberries!" and their cheeks flushed and eyes sparkled with joyous surprise.

"It is Bärenklein!" cried Joseph in delight, as he sprang to his feet, come Lenchen, set your cup down and let us run to meet him."

He did not have to repeat the request, Helena sprang up as quickly as her brother had done, but housewifely instinct prompted her to care for the dishes, they must be put in a safe place before going.

"Oh! stick them under this bush," said Joseph, "nobody would know they were there."

Lenchen secreted them, then hand in hand they flew around the corner of the factory and into the road, where they met a short, stout man with a push-cart. He was about opening his mouth for further calling of his wares, when his eyes lighted upon the children.

"Oh, Bärenklein!" they cried in joy at seeing one from their loved Schellerhaus, "we heard your voice and ran to see you."

"What, are you there, you mountain chicks?" he said, halting and extending to each a hand, "I told your mother that I would plan to reach Reichenstein about noon, and if you were not at work you would hear my voice and run to meet me; and you see Bärenklein was right."

"Our mother, Bärenklein, is she well, and did she send her love to us?"

"She is well, and her only grief is, that you are away from her. She sends her best love and greetings, and will weep for joy when I tell how well you are looking. But first I must give you some berries, here is a double handful of both kinds for each of you, now eat, they are ripe and fresh."

"And taste so good," said the children, as they ate; thanking Bärenklein for his thoughtfulness.

"But how is your uncle, or, as we used to name him in Schellerhaus, the 'growler'; I want to give him my greetings."

"It will be some time before you get return greetings," remarked Joseph, "we have been here two months and hav'nt heard him say anything kind yet."

"But he may have a kind heart," suggested Bärenklein, "remember the chestnut; it comes in a rough burr, yet is good. I must see him."

"This is the time for his noon sleep," said Helena, "he won't see anybody until one o'clock,"

"Good!" commented Bärenklein, "I will go on to the village, sell my wares, and come back this way. I must get something to eat in Richenstein."

"There is some gruel and bread left of our dinner, would you eat it, Bärenklein?" said the girl, "if you will I can go and bring it to you."

"Yes, certainly I will eat it, why not?" and Lenchen ran off, glad that even this little ser-

vice could be rendered to one who had brought her good news from home.

“Ha! that is good!” said the little man. “I will tell your mother what a feast I had of white bread. Did not I say that the chestnut is better than it appears? Here is the cup and spoon, Lenchen, thanks for the kindness, the gruel has refreshed me wonderfully. Now good-bye, until I see you again.”

“Don’t let us tell Bärenklein of our bothers here, he might tell mother and it would worry her,” said Lenchen, as the berry-seller trudged away.

“Oh! mother would not worry too much,” replied Joseph, “she always said that each one of us must have trouble upon earth or we would not try to have treasures laid up in heaven.”

“But we were with her then, and could talk to her, now we are away, and if she heard of any trouble we have she would think it worse than what it is.”

“Oh, well, I didn’t say much; not half as much as I think,” said Joseph, nonchalantly.

“One thing I surely will not tell Bärenklein, and that is, that my coming put poor Rose out

of her place ; it would trouble mother if she knew it."

"Uncle will be sorry if she doesn't get to hear it, he would rather we would all feel badly about it ; he could have found another place for Rose only for that."

"Mother would say that we ought not to judge people harshly, but consider their good properties. Uncle gives us enough to eat and to wear, and we ought not to find fault with him for what he cannot, maybe, help."

The whistle sounded, and the children returned to their work, cheered with the prospect of again seeing Bärenklein, and the afternoon passed happily away.

Toward evening he came, cheerier than ever ; he had sold out his berries with the exception of two baskets which he gave the children.

Ruckert welcomed him more cordially than they had ever seen him welcome any one, and set before him coffee, fresh semmels and cheese, and to the delight of Joseph and Helena, allowed them to share the feast, and after it was finished, he took the visitor over the great factory, and the children accompanied them.

The simple mountaineer was astonished that so many rollers and wheels and shafts could be set and kept in motion by such a light thing as steam, and that one man could manage the monster engine was too wonderful for belief.

In looking upon this wonder, Bärenklein forgot his favorite proverb that "There is nothing new under the sun," and was thoroughly frightened and almost deafened when at six o'clock it gave a shrill whistle to announce that the day's work was done. This surprise was followed by that of hearing the rush of feet through the long corridors and down the steps, all the many work-people hurrying from the factory to their homes. This was followed by such stillness that Bärenklein could not help thinking of that of a human being after the heart had ceased to beat and the blood to course through the veins.

Pale and trembling, he stood looking at the steam-engine, which, he felt, might destroy him at any moment.

"You are in no danger," said Ruckert, amused at the fear of the poor little man; "the steam is shut off."

"Then there must be danger when the steam is on," argued Bärenklein.

"Not unless it bursts, which sometimes happens, in which case it blows a factory to atoms."

"And is there no other danger?"

"Not unless one is careless, and allows himself to be caught in the revolving shafts or the wheels. Folks must be careful and watch what they are doing."

"Wonderful! wonderful!" commented Bärenklein, as they left the engine-room. "Who would imagine that a little thing like steam could do so much? I would not be surprised to hear that it could be made to cut down trees from our mountains, and to pick blackberries."

"Yes," remarked Ruckert, with his sneering smile, "by the time it reaches Schellerhaus I would not wonder if it could be trained to do these things."

The sarcasm was lost upon the innocent-minded and amiable fruit-seller; he took it all in good faith.

"It is a wonderful and useful thing, this steam," replied he, "but God grant that it may never reach us! We want to live as free from

danger as we can. And now I must go, and I thank you heartily for explaining all this to me."

They left the factory, and Bärenklein bade them all a cheery farewell, and they heard him whistling merrily as he walked briskly away upon his long journey.

The next morning Ruckert and the children were in his office, and, having finished breakfast, were waiting for the signal which called the work-people to their daily labor.

"I lost my handkerchief yesterday while going over the factory with Bärenklein," said Ruckert; "go, Helena, and search for it; go first to the engine-room; that was where we were standing last. Hurry; the whistle has blown, and the machinery has started. You must be in your place at the spindles."

The girl ran away, and had been gone but a few minutes when there was a trembling of the building, caused by the sudden stopping of the machinery, followed by a shrill cry and the rush of many feet.

"Something has happened," cried Ruckert, running to the door. "Let no one come into

the office, and don't leave it for a moment until I come back."

The engine had resumed its work, and the machinery was in motion, yet there was much confusion and excitement, which alarmed Joseph so much that he could scarcely stay in the office, and only the fear of angering his uncle kept him from rushing out in search of Lenchen.

At length he heard the spinning-master's step in the corridor; he came in, and Joseph's heart grew painfully agitated at seeing him pale and excited.

"I have wished a hundred times that I had sent you children back to the mountains, and now I wish that you were both ten feet under ground, that I might not be bothered any longer by you," said he. "What are you staring at, boy? Can't you understand that the long plait of hair your sister wears has been caught in the revolving shaft, and that it has twisted off part of her scalp? If she had worn her hair cropped off close to her head, it would not have happened."

Joseph felt the blood chill in his veins; he

could not move from the spot where he stood.

“What will Herr Laudermann say to this?” continued Ruckert, excitedly. “Of course the report will go over the whole country that some one was hurt in our factory.” And he walked hurriedly up and down the office-floor, as though beside himself with anxiety or with anger.

The measured tread of feet outside was followed by the opening of the office-door, and two men came in, bearing the insensible form of Helena.

“Don’t put her on the sofa until I spread a blanket over it,” exclaimed Ruckert, angrily; “the blood will ruin the cover of it.”

“Shame on you, Ruckert,” said one of the men, “to be thinking of saving your sofa when it is your own sister’s child that is hurt!”

Joseph, though almost bereft of his senses from fright and grief, understood the cause of the delay. Ruckert had removed the pillow, and the boy took off his jacket, and, folding it, put it in place, and Lenchen was laid upon the sofa.

One of the workmen had hurried to Reichenstein for a physician as soon as the accident happened, and as soon as possible he returned with Dr. Bruner.

"I will not undertake this case without help," said he, after examining the wound. "There is a surgeon in Warmbrunn; he is the one to apply to; some one must be sent immediately for him."

At this moment Ruckert noticed that a crowd of the factory hands had gathered about the office-door, and his anger blazed out with a suddenness that startled them:

"What are you idling here for? Go back to your work instantly!"

The men hurried to their places, and Ruckert went out to send a messenger to Warmbrunn, while Joseph assisted the doctor in applying remedies to stop the flow of blood.

"Oh, Lenchen," thought he, "our uncle has no more pity for you than had the terrible machinery. How our mother would weep over you were she here!"

The doctor left the room for a few minutes, hoping to find Ruckert and to learn whether

the messenger had gone to Warmbrunn, and Joseph remained beside his sister, tearfully gazing at her pale face.

“If Bärenklein had not come, uncle would not have lost his handkerchief, and Lenchen would not have been sent to search for it,” thought he. “Oh, I hope that God will let her live; I will ask him;” and, sinking upon his knees, the boy offered up his simple, earnest prayer.

After a time the doctor returned to the office, and, to Joseph’s great relief, the surgeon from Warmbrunn, the good Dr. Keller, soon after made his appearance.

“It is a serious case,” commented he after examining the wound, “the American Indian could not have removed the scalp more effectually than the machinery has done. Strong men have died under such an ordeal, and one cannot expect much of a weak girl, but we will do the best we can and leave the result with God.”

It appeared to Joseph when evening came that weeks had elapsed since the accident. He had not eaten, or drank, or rested the whole

day, but had run at the bidding of the doctor or his uncle without thought of fatigue ; all had seemed to him like a troubled dream.

The shock to Helena's system had been so great that her life was in great danger, and Joseph resolved to sit by her all night, hoping she would return to consciousness and speak to him.

Late in the evening his uncle returned from the beer saloon, and coming to the office, he stood by the couch looking down at her.

"If she is not better to-morrow she must go from here," said he, roughly, "my office cannot be turned into a hospital," and taking the lamp he went to another room, leaving Joseph in darkness.

The boy was not afraid, he only dreaded that he might not be able to keep the bandage about Helena's head moist with the fluid the surgeon had left, but even when hearing by the breathing of Ruckert that he was in a deep sleep, he did not dare to bring the lamp, fearing he might waken.

The long night passed, and at length Helena stirred and whispered a few words. Joseph sprang to his feet, leaned over the cot and

listened. To his great distress he found that her mind was wandering; he almost preferred her being unconscious.

Now she stood on a fearful precipice, and implored Joseph to save her from falling, again she was lost in the woods, and in mortal dread of wild animals. "Fly, Bärenklein!" she cried, "the engine is about to burst, we will all be killed."

In vain Joseph strove to soothe her fears, her voice grew louder and more plaintive, and at length her uncle opened the door and commanded silence.

"How can any one sleep in such a bedlam as this," cried he, stormily, "hush this instant, or you will be sorry for it. To-morrow you shall both leave here, I will not stand this noise another night."

The moment his uncle returned to his bed Joseph flung himself upon his knees and prayed for help in this great trial, and his prayer was answered. Helena's voice dropped to a whisper, then was still and she slept; and when daylight came, Joseph's weary head rested upon the arm of the sofa, his face as pale as that of his sister.

CHAPTER VI.

SCHOOLMASTER KROWN.

THE next morning a wagon with a bedding of straw drew up before the entrance of the factory, the driver stepped out and went to the office of Spinning-master Ruckert.

In a few minutes he emerged, carrying the helpless form of Helena, followed by Joseph, pale and weeping. He did not see the many tear-dimmed eyes gazing at them from the windows of the factory, nor know that nods and words of sympathy and sorrow for the poor children passed from one to another of those who had no power to help.

Joseph's jacket still served for a pillow, and as soon as both were in the wagon the driver took up the lines, and they went off at a quick pace.

The doors and window-shutters of Herr Lau-dermann's dwelling were closed, but curious eyes were peeping out, noticing the effect which the heartless conduct of mill-owner and manager was having upon the lookers-on.

"Whom have you there, Binder?" inquired a clear, manly voice, as they neared Reichenstein, and the driver halted to reply:

"It is the little girl who was hurt yesterday by the machinery, Herr Schoolmaster."

"Why, I heard that she was badly hurt; certainly the jolting over the rough road will be injurious."

Binder shrugged his shoulders, but made no reply.

"Did our good Reichenstein doctor say that it was safe to move her?" continued Herr Krown.

"He thinks that she will not live, and that it will not make much difference whether she is moved or not."

A chill went to the heart of Joseph at these words; he wrung his hands, and tears flowed down his pale cheeks.

"Where are you taking her?"

"To the surgeon at Warmbrunn; he will tell me whether the hospital there, or her mother's house at Schellerhaus, is the best place for her. Ruckert won't have her at the factory."

"Binder," said Herr Krown, "my house is

close by. I cannot see a person in her suffering condition jolted in a rough wagon. You must halt and leave her with my wife and me."

"I dare not, Herr Schoolmaster. I was told to drive to Warmbrunn."

"But you shall, Binder; do as I tell you, or I will report the case to the authorities. Cruelty to children is punishable by law. You shall not suffer by obeying my request."

"Then I shall gladly obey, for it is no pleasant thing to me to hear the sighs of the girl and to see the tears of the boy."

In a few minutes they reached the school-house, and Herr Krown hurried in to tell his wife, and to help prepare a place for Lenchen. While he was gone several villagers surrounded the wagon, and discussed the situation.

"The shame of it! that a rich man like Herr Laudermann would let this poor child, who was hurt in his factory, be taken to the hospital, and in a rough mill-wagon!" commented one of them.

"And her Uncle Ruckert, what do you think of him?" questioned another. "I always heard that he was a hard-hearted and ugly-tempered

man, but I did not think that he would be so cruel to his sister's children."

"But one cannot expect anything better of such a beer-drinker," said another. "Ruckert is scarcely ever entirely sober."

At that moment Herr Krown appeared, took up Lenchen as tenderly as if she were his own child, carried her into his house, and placed her upon a comfortable bed in a large, well-ventilated room.

"What am I to do?" thought Joseph, who remained in the wagon. "I dare not go back and tell uncle that Helena is in the schoolmaster's house."

"No," replied one of the men, "Ruckert hates Herr Krown, because the schoolmaster believes it to be his duty to warn him against strong drink, and Ruckert is too ill-tempered to take the advice kindly. We will ask Herr Krown if you may stay."

"Oh, please do!" said Joseph, eagerly, "I cannot go back to the factory and leave her here."

"Where is her brother?" said Herr Krown, coming to the door and looking toward the

wagon. "Come, boy, I expect you to help us take care of her."

"Oh, thank you! thank you! dear Herr Krown. I will stay by her night and day," cried the boy, joyfully.

"Then go straight up to the sick room, I have some matters to attend to out here. Which of you," continued he, turning to the villagers, "will, for money and thanks, go to Warmbrunn and tell Surgeon Keller that I wish him to come here to see the sick girl. I would go willingly, but cannot leave my school."

"I will go," replied a young weaver, stepping forward; "you and the Frau Schoolmistress were kind to my mother when she was ill, and Surgeon Keller pulled an aching tooth for me and would not charge me anything. I will go willingly."

"Bravo, good Hoffman!" answered the schoolmaster, "I thank you beforehand for your great service. Tell Dr. Keller for me that I hope he will come as soon as possible, and do what he can for the poor child."

"Keller is the greatest doctor in Warm-

brunn," remarked an old man in the crowd, "he is rich, too, and has his fine carriages and horses; he will charge a pretty penny if he undertakes the case."

"That will be all right, Father Armdt," replied the schoolmaster, cheerfully, "if he cures her he shall, and ought to be well paid."

Hoffman had during this time set off to Warmbrunn, and as soon as the wagon turned to go back to the factory, Herr Krown went into the house and up to the room where Joseph sat beside his sister, then descended to the school-room where the children had already gathered.

With light step Frau Krown passed to and fro arranging the sick room, and speaking cheery words to Joseph.

In less than an hour the roll of wheels was heard, and Doctor Keller's carriage stood before the door, Hoffman being on the box with the driver. He had fortunately met the surgeon, who was on his way to see a patient beyond Reichenstein, which accounted for the prompt response to the call. Doctor Keller was not only a skillful physician and surgeon,

but a cheery, kind-hearted man, and had a hope of Lenchen's recovery, which he was glad to impart to Frau Krown and Joseph, and prescribing such remedies as the case demanded, he left, promising to give the child attention so long as his visits were needed.

Frau Krown stayed long enough in the room to see that Joseph was attentive to every want of his sister, and feeling satisfied that she would not be neglected, returned to her household duties, going softly down stairs that Helena, who was enjoying a sweet sleep, might not be disturbed. In an hour or so she returned, and found Joseph's weary head upon the pillow, also in a deep sleep. She had finished her morning work, and taking some sewing from a basket, she sat beside them, nothing disturbing the silence but the drowsy hum of the children's voices in the room below, and the ticking of the clock in the hall.

The doctor's words and manner had comforted Joseph, and his spirits rose in spite of his weariness and the past night's sleepless anxiety.

When Frau Krown had gone below, he had knelt by his sister's bedside and thanked his

Father in heaven for the great blessing of hope, and prayed that it might be realized.

In a few minutes he had heard the voices of the children singing a morning hymn, "God's ways are best," which brought tears to his eyes, for it was one which he and Lenchen had often sung with their mother in their mountain home.

"God's ways are best." The sweet words seemed to have a new meaning to them; he believed that even this terrible accident which had befallen Helena must have some good in it.

When he awoke he looked about him with a surprised glance. Instead of the dim, cobwebby den in which he slept in the factory after the first night of his arrival, he was in a light, clean room; Lenchen was on a white-draped bed; and the pleasant, kind face of the schoolmaster's wife was a marked contrast to that of his uncle.

"Have I been long asleep?" asked he, anxiously. "Poor Lenchen! I should not have forgotten her."

"You were worn out, poor boy," said Frau Krown. "I was glad to see you sleeping so

soundly that some one could have stolen you without your knowing it."

"It was so sweet and still here, and the dear Herr Doctor thought that Lenchen would live, and the children sang 'God's ways are best,' and I felt so happy that I slept without knowing it."

"Helena is better than when Doctor Keller came," said Frau Krown. "She has but little fever now; the medicine that he left has done her good. The good sleep that she is having is a great blessing; she will feel much refreshed."

"As I do; sleep has made me like another person."

"Or like yourself," smiled Frau Krown. "Yes, sleep is one of the greatest of blessings, as is also food, and I know that you must be hungry. Go down to the dining-room," continued she, in the low tone that they both used that Lenchen might not be disturbed; "Fritz will give you the dinner that I kept warm for you. It is long past dinner-time; the afternoon session is nearly over."

"You are so good to us," said Joseph, as he

rose to obey; "mother would cry for joy if she knew that we had found such good friends as you and Schoolmaster Krown."

"Do you think that your uncle will write and tell her of the accident to your sister?"

"No, I am sure that he won't take the trouble, nor be willing to pay the postage on a letter. He was angry that Binder would take his bed to put in the wagon for Lenchen, and he will be angrier when he finds that the blanket did not go back with the bed."

"I have rolled it up to send to him; you can take it to him this evening."

This was not welcome news to Joseph. He dreaded meeting his uncle, knowing his dislike to Schoolmaster Krown; but there was nothing to do but to go, and he tried to forget it while he went down to dinner.

That evening, after school was dismissed, Herr Krown held a consultation with his wife in regard to the wounded girl and ways and means of providing her with help to recover.

Herr Krown was a popular and efficient teacher, faithful in all his duties, and provided for his family to the best of his ability. But

his only support was his school, which did not allow him much over and above his family expenses, so that he could not give as much aid to the needy as he wished to do. He had given Lenchen the quiet and comfort of a good room, and his wife was giving her faithful attendance. Moreover, he had employed a skillful physician, whom he felt bound by honor to pay for service rendered; but further than that his means would not allow him to go, and he knew that she needed medicines, and delicacies to tempt her appetite when she should be able to take more solid nourishment than at present, which he was not able to obtain. He also knew that there were benevolent hearts that would quickly respond were the need made known; and he resolved to do what he could to give the public the privilege of helping.

He knew also that there was no surer and better way to let the public know the need than through the medium of printer's ink. He resolved to write a brief, truthful account of the accident, to speak of the suffering endured by the little girl, and to ask for contributions for her benefit, promising that whatever was given

should be faithfully devoted to her use. This notice he sent to the editor of a daily paper, Joseph taking the letter to post on his way to the factory; and this being done, he could only pray that it would result in bringing necessary comforts for the girl under their care.

As Joseph passed the garden belonging to the mill-owner, he heard the sound of merry voices and of sweet music. Peeping over the hedge, he saw gaily-dressed children promenading the paths and playing games under the trees, while near the house was a long table, which was being filled by busy servants with cakes, fruit, and other refreshments.

Joseph remembered that it was Adolph's birthday, and the gaiety was very attractive to the boy outside. He would have liked to linger, but, remembering his errand, he went on to the factory, and, glancing up, saw his uncle seated by the office-window which looked toward the garden. Joseph did not halt, but passed in, and on up to the door, where he gave a timid knock, but receiving no response, he opened it and went in.

Ruckert did not turn his head, but continued

gazing from the window. Joseph was glad of this, for he expected sharp words and angry threats for daring to go to Schoolmaster Krown, and it was a great relief to him that his uncle appeared entirely unaware of his entrance.

He laid the blanket on the sofa and passed out and down the stairs with light heart and step, and had passed through the factory door when he felt something pelting him, and looking up, he saw that his uncle had, after all, been conscious of his visit.

During the carnivals in Italy, little white balls are thrown in sport; but with Spinning-master Ruckert the case was different, for the balls were black, being nothing more nor less than the blackberries given the children by Bärenklein, and were thrown in anger, and not in sport.

Joseph looked at the berries dropping thick and fast into the dust, and thought of the poor berry-seller's weariness as he roamed over the mountains in search of them, but knowing it was of no use to try to save them except by hurrying away as quickly as possible, he started off at a run without looking back.

When he reached the mill-owner's garden he found several of the factory people collected by the hedge watching the sports within, their hearts filled with envious bitterness at the gay doings. Some of them controlled their feelings and made no comment, contenting themselves with looking at the fire-works, and the tables filled with dainties which they could never hope to enjoy.

"All this expensive pleasure bought with our toil," muttered one.

"Herr Laudermann is like the rich man in the Bible who fares sumptuously every day, while we are like the poor Lazarus who must eat the crumbs which fall from his table," said another.

"He is a hard, cruel taskmaster, and if trouble comes upon him he does not deserve that anybody should pity him," said a third, "he never knew what it was to toil for his bread and get little pay."

Had Joseph not been so anxious about Lenchen he would have loved to linger, and watch the games and listen to the music, but the thought of her, helpless upon a sick bed, urged

him away, and he hurried toward the village. He had reached the extreme end of the garden when he heard a voice, and, going close to the hedge, saw Toska Laudermann looking through an opening in it, her cheeks flushed by her quick walk to see and speak to him.

“Are you the brother of the girl who got hurt in our factory yesterday?” inquired she.

“Yes, it is my sister, Helena, who was hurt.”

“Is she living? Is there any hope that she will live?”

“Yes, she is living, and the doctor hopes she will get well.”

“Is it true that the dear schoolmaster and Frau Krown took her to their house, and let you stay there with her?”

“Yes, and more than that, he sent for Doctor Keller, in Warmbrunn, and will pay him out of his own pocket.”

“Oh, I am so glad; now I can enjoy the party better. Tell Herr Krown and Frau Krown that I thank them, and mamma and Adolph and I will pray to God to bless them.”

“Toska! Toska! where are you?” cried a voice from the garden.

Toska made no response, but reaching through the hedge she put a small package in Joseph’s hand.

“Take this to your sister,” said she, “and please give her my love, and tell her I am sorry she was hurt, and hope she will soon be well.”

She ran away and Joseph walked on, opening the package as he went. He found a large slice of sponge cake wrapped by itself, and in an envelope were three pieces of silver.

“Toska is good and kind,” thought he, gratefully, “although with rich people’s children, she does not forget the poor one that was hurt. I will give these things to Frau Krown, she will know best what to do with them.”

When he reached the school-house he told Frau Krown Toska’s message, and gave her the package.

“Toska is a good child, and will grow to be a useful Christian woman,” said she. “Lenchen would not be allowed to eat the cake even if she could do so; you can have it, and the

money I will put away until such time as she can use it."

That night Frau Krown watched at the bedside of Helena, allowing Joseph to have a full night's sleep, which refreshed him as nothing else could have done.

CHAPTER VII.

FRAU ECKHARDT'S VISIT.

DOCTOR KELLER came the next day, as he promised, and was glad to see favorable symptoms in the condition of his patient.

"If she continues in this way she will be out of danger in a few days," said he. "All that she needs is good nursing, and she will get it here."

"We will do the best that we can for her," said Frau Krown, and these words bore a sweet assurance to Joseph, as he compared his sister's surroundings with the dingy den that she had occupied at the factory.

The seed sown by Herr Krown in the daily newspaper bore fruit, for on the third day from that on which the notice appeared, three letters were brought by the postman to the school-house, all containing money for Lenchen, together with words of sympathy for her affliction and good wishes for her recovery.

Every day, for some time after, brought one

or more letters from the high and the lowly, the rich and the poor; sometimes the mite of some person who had been touched with compassion for one of these little ones; sometimes a substantial gift, the donor specifying that it was for a comfortable chair or some other luxury for the invalid.

"See, dear Lenchen," said the schoolmaster to his wife, "how these gifts prove that the hearts of people are ever ready to respond to the call of need from a fellow-creature. When this poor child recovers sufficiently to realize what has been done for her, her heart will be cheered that she has such friends as these words of sympathy prove, besides the real benefit to her that their gifts will be in many ways."

"Toska is outside, and wishes to see Lenchen," said Fritz, coming in at that moment. "Shall I tell her that she may come in?"

"Yes," replied Herr Krown; "mother wishes to ask her about the money that she sent by Joseph."

The schoolmaster and his wife welcomed her cordially, and spoke cheerfully, for they saw that she could scarcely restrain her tears.

"Dear Toska," said Frau Krown, "do your parents know that you came here, and that you sent money to Helena?"

Toska reddened, and her eyes fell under the gaze of the others.

"No," she said, "no one knows it but myself."

"Then it would not be right for us to use it."

"Oh, yes, you can use it; it is my pocket-money, which I can use as I please."

"I believe you, and I thank you for it, as I know that Lenchen will when she is able to speak to you; but I hope that you will not object to my asking your father if he is willing for us to receive it," remarked the schoolmaster.

"Oh, no; you can ask him, and I know that he will tell you that my allowance is my own, and that he never questions me as to what I do with it."

"It was very good and kind in you to remember the poor child," remarked Frau Krown, kindly.

"I felt so sorry for her," replied Toska, her eyes filling with tears. "Will she get well soon?"

"She is in God's hands, and we cannot tell; but we know that what he wills is right."

"May I see her?"

"The doctor does not allow visitors, but she is sleeping now, and, if you will be satisfied to see her, but will not disturb her by speaking, you can go to her bedside. Come, I will go with you."

Toska followed Frau Krown to the room above, where Joseph was sitting by his sister, and tears fell from her eyes as she looked at the white cheeks and the sunken eyes, and the head bound up with a white cloth. To her it seemed impossible for Helena to get well; and, fearing that the weeping which she could not restrain would disturb her, she quickly left the room.

Herr Krown and his wife believed implicitly in what Toska had told them; nevertheless, in this instance, they were not satisfied to accept the money without the father's knowledge; so the schoolmaster wrote a line that evening to him.

To his surprise, he received the next day a letter sent by a messenger, saying that he was

perfectly willing that his daughter should have used her money in that way, and to it he added a gift of ten dollars.

This unexpected present for Lenchen was gratefully received, and the schoolmaster and his wife censured themselves that they had fostered a harsh opinion of the factory-owner, not knowing, in the simplicity of their hearts, that the list of contributors to the fund for Helena had attracted people's attention to the fact that Herr Laudermann had given nothing, and that he was compelled, out of deference to public opinion, to make this show of liberality, much against his will.

Several days passed, and Lenchen, though apparently suffering less pain, was feverish and delirious at times, and was not yet out of danger. Sometimes for hours together she would remain in a partly unconscious state which was not sleep, and all were very anxious, fearing that she would never be as she once was; and they longed to hear a word that would show that her mind was clear, and that she recognized them.

One evening she aroused from a deep sleep,

and turned her eyes toward the good Krowns and Joseph.

"I am thirsty; please give me some water," said she, in a natural tone of voice.

Joseph, with a thrill of joy in his heart, went down to the well and brought a glass of pure, cool water, of which she drank eagerly.

"It is good, so good!" said she, softly.

"Do you know me, Lenchen?" asked Joseph.

"Yes, certainly; you are my brother," replied she, in a feeble voice.

"Have you any pain now?"

"Yes, my head hurts; but I am sleepy; good night, Joseph;" and she closed her eyes.

During this short dialogue the schoolmaster and his wife looked at each other with tears of joy in their eyes; there was a great change for the better; she was now out of danger.

Leaving her sleeping sweetly, the three went into an adjoining room, where Fritz was studying his lessons, Herr Krown wishing to count the money which had been received in response to his notice in the newspaper.

The little basket containing the letters was

taken from the desk, and the money was placed upon the table in the order in which the value called for, and Herr Krown and Joseph counted it.

“Three hundred and seventeen dollars and nineteen groschen; this exceeds by far my expectation when I sent the notice. Truly God has blessed the effort. My children, you now see the power of printed words. A few lines brought help and sympathy to the poor child from many whom she has never seen, nor will see in this world. God wonderfully blessed my feeble words.”

“Father,” said Fritz, “of course it was through God’s blessing that this money came, but I am sure if Joseph or I had written it there would not have been a tenth part of this money. I heard people say that they could not read your words without tears filling their eyes.”

“But I could not write differently; I merely told the exact truth, mentioned how and when the child was hurt, and asked for contributions to provide comforts for her, which I was not able to get.”

"And the villagers say that it is because people have so much respect for you and confidence in you that they sent so much," added Fritz, "and won't everybody be glad to hear that she is out of danger?"

"We will wait until after the doctor's visit to-morrow," said Herr Krown, "and if he pronounces her out of danger I will write to her mother and invite her to come and visit Helena, and send her money to pay her expenses here and back. It is possible that a newspaper containing my account of the accident might fall into her hands, which would give her great anxiety."

Joseph's eyes lighted with joy at hearing this; nothing could be such a pleasure to him as to see his loved mother.

"It was by Doctor Keller's advice that we did not send for her before, my dear boy," said Herr Krown, "your mother is a delicate, nervous woman, and he said it was better for her and for Helena that she would not be here. When she comes I will consult with her in regard to Lenchen's money."

The basket was put away carefully, and then

the little family knelt in prayer, then Herr Krown and Fritz retired for the night, Frau Krown and Joseph watching alternately by the sick bed.

The doctor's visit the next day gave them all great satisfaction, Lenchen was improving, and he gave full permission for the mother to come. That evening Herr Krown wrote to her, and two days after she came from Schellerhaus.

Frau Krown kept her from the sick-room until she was entirely composed, for she wept many tears at hearing of the sufferings of her loved daughter, and was deeply grateful to the kind family who were so good to her children.

Her visit did Helena good, and although there was of necessity but little conversation between them, the mere thought of her mother being beside her was a comfort. Frau Krown was relieved from all night watching, Frau Eckhardt sharing Lenchen's great bed, and ready at any moment to wait upon her. During the day following that of her arrival, she visited her brother at the factory, but was met with such a storm of reproaches for sending her children to him, that she did not repeat

the visit during the two weeks she remained in Reichenstein.

Lenchen's recovery was slow, but all were patient; and during his mother's stay, not being needed in the sick-room, Joseph went down to the school-room, where his time was well employed, and when his mother returned to Schellerhaus, Lenchen had so far recovered that his study hours were not interrupted.

Doctor Keller refused all pay for his services, so there was three hundred dollars to Lenchen's credit in the Reichenstein bank, for, upon consulting with Frau Eckhardt, it was decided that it should be placed there to remain, unless there was an urgent necessity for the mother or the children to use it.

CHAPTER VIII.

NEW MACHINERY.

THE beautiful summer passed away, then the equally beautiful autumn, and winter had come, the factory people working morning and evening by lamp-light.

The weavers in the cottages did the same, and though working early and late, many of them scarcely kept their families in the necessities of life, not owing alone to the moderate wages paid by Herr Lauderman, but because in many instances more than half their earnings went into the saloon-keeper's pockets instead of those of provision dealers.

Often these families were out of fuel, and the wives and children would have to roam the woods for what they could gather.

There were churches in Reichenstein, and had these weavers and others passed their Sabbaths there, they would have been far happier, and better fitted for their daily labor. But

they preferred to congregate where beer and other strong drinks were sold, and pass the time in gossip and games of chance, and stirring up their anger and malice against the factory owner and others in authority, besides squandering their hard earnings in strong drink.

Schoolmaster Krown, after his day's labor of teaching, passed his evenings with his family, and to Joseph and Lenchen, as well as his wife and children, this was the happiest part of the day. But through that winter Frau Krown noticed that her husband withdrew from the home circle on Saturday evenings, and remained some time at a saloon which was in sight of the school-house.

Duty to God and the loved ones he had given her was the guiding star of Frau Krown's life, and, although it was a painful subject, she felt that as a faithful wife she must tell her husband her anxious thoughts in regard to it, and warn him of the danger he was in.

She said nothing to her children—Fritz nor little Anna—nor to Joseph and Lenchen, nor her neighbors; but to her husband, in the se-

clusion of their own room, she told of the dread that oppressed her heart.

“I thank you heartily, dear Lenchen,” said he, kindly, “and am sorry the subject has given you a moment’s uneasiness, and I will explain. Suppose I saw the village in flames, would it not be right that I should do all I could to extinguish them? But would it not be better to make all the exertion possible to prevent the fire that an evil man is kindling? It is for this purpose I go to weaver Homier’s ale-house on Saturday evenings, to plead with him not to sell liquor to the weavers and others, and to plead with the workmen not to squander their hard-earned wages. I would have told you where and why I went, but feared you would be anxious, knowing that I would get Homier’s ill-will. It would be far pleasanter for me to stay away, but the duty of doing all I can for the good of my fellow-creatures lays upon my conscience. If I looked upon myself as a mere hireling, I would only concern myself about the children under my care so long as they are with me during school-hours, then let them go their way. But I cannot help thinking of the

intemperate fathers, the hard-working mothers and their needs and privations, and their sad, discouraged hearts, and I strive to strike at the root of the matter by visiting and pleading with the saloon-keepers."

These words touched the heart of Frau Krown with remorse that she had so misjudged her husband. It removed a care from her mind, but another took its place, that of dread of Homier's ill-will.

On the following Saturday evening, as the schoolmaster entered the saloon, he heard Homier making a speech to the assembled loungers, and he halted to listen.

"It is plainly to be seen," said the would-be orator, "that the fault of our need and poverty is to be laid upon the machinery which Herr Laudermann has put into his factory. If all the work were done by hand, the number employed would be doubled, and we would get better wages. Then we could have houses and lands of our own, and not have to be satisfied with the crumbs which fall from our rich employer's table.

"By having these spinning-machines, and

thus having to employ fewer hands, they can afford to sell the linen much cheaper. More than that, the employer and the manager can put poorer material in the manufacture, and if the purchasers in foreign countries find that they have been cheated, what does our employer care? He has filled his pockets, and other people must look out for themselves.

“So cotton is mixed in with the linen, and, when woven, is stiffened and run through the machine which presses the pattern in it, and it comes out so smooth and glossy that one could take oath that it was linen damask. But let the purchaser put it in the wash-tub, and the thickness and gloss will be gone, and nothing will remain but a flimsy cotton rag. In this way our Silesia, which has always been noted for its linen trade, loses its good name just to fill the purses of such people as our employer.”

Here the weaver-saloon-keeper paused to take breath, and another weaver took up the argument.

“Homier is right!” said he, with a blow of his powerful fist upon the table.

“He is right!” said Herr Krown, stepping

forward; "but what advice does he give you for changing the state of affairs?"

"First," continued Homier, "let all the machinery which hackles cotton and flax and spins it be thrown overboard, and let the work be done by hand. In short, let it be as in the old times, which were far better for working-men. Particularly, must there be less cotton bought, and more flax raised."

"Is that the opinion of you all?" inquired Herr Krown, looking from one to another.

"Yes! yes! that is just what we all believe!" and again the fists came down upon the table with force. "There is no need for inventions; let all the work be done by hand, as it was in old times."

"But suppose that the supply of cotton were shut off, how could our army be clothed, to say nothing of the greatly increasing population, which makes it necessary that material for clothing be made faster than in the old times of spinning-wheels and weavers' looms? It would be impossible to raise enough flax for the people, and cotton is much cheaper. If you could go back to the old times with the

knowledge that you have now, not one of you would be satisfied."

"But new inventions throw poor working people out of employment," said one of the weavers, doggedly. "How are we to live if machinery can do the work of hundreds of human beings who have to eat and be clothed?"

"But work could not be done fast enough by hand for the great increase of population, and there is always opposition to new inventions. For instance, the railroads. When they were first in use there was much grumbling among wagoners, smiths, wheelwrights, harness-makers, saddlers, horse-dealers, ostlers, and others; but the railroads were successful and have been to everybody's advantage."

"Since you are so wise, Schoolmaster Krown," said Homier, angrily, "be so kind as to give us some useful advice as to how we are to make up the loss to us through the use of machinery. It is very easy for one who has no trouble to gain his daily bread to preach to people who, with all their hard toil, can scarcely earn enough for their families to eat, and who stand a fair chance of losing the means to earn even that."

“I understand your case exactly,” said Herr Krown, mildly, “and it will not be the first time that I have told you where the blame rests. Doing away with machinery would be of no avail, for factories would be started in more progressive places, and trade would be taken from Silesia. You had better be satisfied with small earnings than with none. My advice is, that you do not allow yourselves to be soured and saddened by useless complaining, and to be made miserable through your own misdeeds. Give up the self-indulgences which you can do without, for it is a sin and a shame that you squander for beer and card-playing the money that ought to be used in buying bread for your wives and children. Thirdly, do not bring up all your children to be weavers. It is a misfortune that you think that the children must follow in the footsteps of their fathers in this respect. The occupation is overstocked, and you might choose something else for them. And lastly, you must remember that ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.’ Also this: ‘I have been young, and now am old;

yet have I never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.' If you would only attend service in God's house, and pass your evenings with your families, you would be far happier and more prosperous."

"Our schoolmaster speaks only as he understands," remarked one of the men, in a low tone. "If he sat from early morning until late at night upon a weaver's stool, and had his good work found fault with in order that his earnings might be cut down, and had to live upon oat-cake and potatoes, he would whistle a different tune."

"We are not beasts of burden," cried Homier, striking his fists upon the table. "It is unjust that some people shall have everything and we have nothing. What it cost our factory-owner to have that birthday party would have kept a weaver's family for a whole year."

These words were echoed by others, and, amid shrugs and nods, and pounding of fists upon the table, Herr Krown left the saloon.

"I, at least, need not reproach myself for not trying to help," thought he, as he walked slowly homeward. "A Christian must work and not

weary. He may never reap what he has sown. God alone can give the increase. If I have influenced even one for good, my work will not be in vain."

Reports of these meetings of Schoolmaster Krown with the weavers reached the ears of Ruckert, and he duly reported them to the mill-owner. Both men had a bitter dislike to Herr Krown, and, knowing this, the factory people took keen pleasure in telling them what they would dislike to hear. The spinning-master reminded Herr Laudermann that so much dissatisfaction among the weavers was not known until Herr Krown commenced visiting the saloons; and that there was no doubt that he influenced the working people against their employers.

Rather hearing evil than good of his fellow-men, Herr Laudermann did not stop to inquire into the truth of this charge; his dislike to the schoolmaster greatly increased; and when Lenchen was able to walk out, and Herr Krown went with her to thank the mill-owner for the gift of ten dollars, they were ordered to leave the house.

Helena burst into tears, but became composed when she found that Herr Krown was not disturbed by the rudeness of the factory-owner; and Frau Krown comforted her by reminding her that it is better to suffer injustice than to inflict it.

"We only did what should be expected of us, by calling to thank him, as we have done, either by letter or personal visit, all who contributed," remarked Herr Krown. "That our courtesy was not appreciated is no fault of ours."

His words were not without effect upon Lenchen, neither had his counsel been useless in regard to the weavers, and there would have been, probably, no further trouble, had not a new offence arisen, which aroused their anger until it culminated in a riot.

At the beginning of March several freight-wagons halted in the village of Reichenstein, bound for the factory of Herr Laudermann, and containing the different parts of a set of machinery for weaving. The news flew like the wind from one weaver's cottage to another, and men, women, and children gathered about the

wagons, making threats of vengeance against the new invention, which would deprive them of employment; and, had it not been for the watchfulness of the drivers, the machinery would have been demolished. The wagons were driven hurriedly away, and the machinery was placed safely in the factory.

But the tumult increased in the village, for the men, instead of returning to their work, remained talking and inflaming the anger of each other, hints being cast abroad that all that remained for them to do was to attack the factory and to destroy the machinery; but as no one, in that stage of the affair, offered to be leader, no plans were made; instead, they went to the different saloons, where they talked and threatened, and drank beer until what money they had was gone, and they could get no more.

Schoolmaster Krown was very anxious over this excitement, dreading an insurrection among the weavers; and, putting aside the thought that he had been told to leave the house of Herr Laudermann, he went there that evening to warn the mill-owner of his danger, that he might be on his guard.

“Let them come, the ungrateful wretches, to whom I have given employment for years,” replied he, haughtily. “In my factory are four hundred and thirty-five people who will stand by me against the weavers. We have guns and other weapons to keep them at bay. One shot among them will scatter them in all directions. You, Herr Schoolmaster, have much to answer for in stirring up this fire, and you are getting frightened, now that there is danger of your being scorched.”

“My conscience is entirely clear of anything of the kind,” replied Herr Krown, mildly; “instead, I have done the best that I could to make your work-people contented. I hope and pray that my fears of a rebellion are without foundation; and may God take us in his keeping, and spare us the crime of bloodshed!”

His words made but little impression upon the mill-owner, and Herr Krown went home, told his wife of his intentions, and set out for Warmbrunn to give the authorities knowledge of the affair, that they might be prepared to send assistance at short notice if it were needed.

CHAPTER IX. .

THE ATTACK.

REICHENSTEIN was a long, straggling village of about a thousand inhabitants, many of them weavers; but farmers and day-laborers allied themselves to the weavers in their intended attack upon the factory, some because they feared the destruction of their own property, if they did not; and others, because they were glad of an opportunity to show their spite against the mill-owner.

Night drew on, and what the schoolmaster dreaded came to pass; the weavers, inflamed by anger and strong drink, congregated in the saloons to discuss the order of proceeding, then marched in a body to make the attack, the crowd increasing as it passed on.

Herr Laudermann was warned of their approach, and could have gotten out of their reach, but he considered it cowardly to take refuge in flight, besides, he counted upon the faithfulness of his men in the factory, and be-

lieved a few shots fired at random among the crowd would scatter them to their homes. But as a rule the men in the factory sided with the weavers, instead of remaining there to defend their employers property they slipped out, and in the darkness joined the attacking party, aiding in carrying on the work of destruction. A few remained faithful, among them Spining-master Ruckert, who seeing that the mob had halted at Herr Laudermann's dwelling and was about to attack it, hurried from the factory in order to assist the mill-owner in barricading, and other means of defence.

The enemy was not a company of well-disciplined soldiers marching to battle, but a rough, half-intoxicated mob, who commenced the attack with shouts and yells, for the double purpose of frightening the mill-owner and his family, and putting spirit in the laggards who had joined them.

The savage yells had its effect upon the wife and daughter of Herr Laudermann, they were almost insensible from fright and, plead with him to flee with them to a place of safety, but instead, he raised a window in the second story

and called to the mob to know the cause of their attack. A storm of bricks, stones and whatever else they could lay their hands upon was the answer, which shattered all the front windows of the handsome dwelling, some of the broken glass flying in the faces of the mill-owner and Adolph, cutting them severely.

“Fire among the cowardly hounds!” cried Herr Laudermann, in a rage, and Ruckert obeyed, but instead of intimidating the mob, as expected, it only excited them to greater deeds of violence, and with renewed shouts and yells they battered down the doors and swarmed through the house.

“Burn the murderer’s den!” they yelled, “burn all that belongs to him;” “kill him like a dog, he tried to kill us!” These and many other terrible threats were made by the infuriated mob as they searched for the hated mill-owner and his family, and not finding them, proceeded to throw the costly furniture into the street. Elegant mirrors, drapery, valuable paintings, statuary, piano, chandeliers, and all other valuable possessions of a wealthy household lay in heaps before the door, and plun-

derers were on hand to carry off what they could sell.

The cellar was visited, and expensive wines and other liquors were distributed among the crowd, increasing their already intoxicated condition and adding to their violence and brutality.

The tumult was heard in the village, sending terror to the hearts of women and children, among them the family of Schoolmaster Krown; the din of breaking glass, the yielding to heavy blows upon doors and windows, the shouts and yells, and, above all, the sound of fire-arms were tokens of violence which none could listen to unmoved.

Frau Krown's anxiety for her husband was so great that she could not remain at home, but taking her daughter Anna, and Helena by the hand, she went to the scene, accompanied by Joseph and Fritz. They glided along under the cover of darkness through the garden way until they reached the arbor back of the dwelling, from whence they could see and hear yet be unnoticed by the mob. They were scarcely inside when they heard a suppressed sob, and

were conscious that others beside themselves were in the arbor.

“Who is here?” inquired Frau Krown.

“A poor frightened mother and her daughter,” was the response.

“Gracious Father above!” said Frau Krown, “it is the voice of Frau Laudermann,” and she reached out her hand and placed it upon the head of the terror-stricken woman.

“Yes, and I know you have a tender, Christian heart and will not betray us to our enemies, but will help us to escape. Oh, Frau Krown, I am nearly dead from anxiety and terror.”

“Don’t despair, dear friend; come, we will help you to our home in the village; there you will be safe.”

“But I cannot walk,” replied the lady, with a groan of pain, “I fell while running here for safety, and sprained my ankle terribly. My Toska tried with all her frail strength to help me, but I had to stay here, dreading each minute that they would find us and kill us.”

“Come, boys, help me,” said Frau Krown, and half leading, half carrying the almost helpless lady, they passed out the garden, and were

keeping close to the hedge to avoid notice, when they heard the footsteps of some of the rioters following them.

"I am lost!" said poor Frau Laudermann, almost fainting from terror.

"No, no! don't lose courage! They will not know you if you don't speak."

"Save my Toska," moaned the poor mother, "and let me die if I must! Oh! my poor husband and son! Perhaps they are already dead!"

"Don't speak, but let us walk on as though not seeing them," whispered Frau Krown, and at the same instant Lenchen slipped the white bandage from her head, and placed it on that of Toska.

"They will think that you are the one who was hurt in the mill," she whispered, "and nothing will tempt them to harm you."

"Halt! Who are you?" cried several rough voices, as their owners blocked the way.

"Your good friend Schoolmaster Krown's wife, and her children and foster-children. Please let us hurry home, for we are somewhat frightened at the noise."

"But who is this woman with you? Tell us that!" cried one of the men, roughly.

"It is one of my friends who is coming to visit me, and, as she has a sprained ankle, we have to walk slowly in the dark."

"Wait until the mill-owner's house is on fire, and it will be light enough."

"Take heed that the whole village does not go up in flame. The wind is in the east, and will carry the sparks to the straw roofs. What harm has the house done, that you wish to destroy it?"

"The house has done nothing, only the man who lived in it. If we capture a snail, we take his house with him; if we take an ear of corn, we take the husk."

"But in burning his house, you will, in all likelihood, burn your own. Remember that."

The men hurried back to their yelling companions, while Frau Krown walked on to the village, with the help of the boys getting Frau Laudermann safely into the school-house, and placed her upon a lounge; then she prepared soothing applications for the swollen and painful ankle. In her care for her guest she did

not notice that the children had all gone back to the factory; but it did not give her much anxiety, as she knew that they would be careful to keep out of danger.

Her words in regard to the danger to the village were duly considered, even in the excited and intoxicated condition of the rioters, and as soon as they rejoined their companions they yelled, "The machinery! the machinery!" and the attention of the mob was turned from burning the dwelling to the destruction of the works in the factory.

Rushing there, they stormed the heavily-barricaded door until they battered it down; then they streamed into the great rooms and corridors, and were met by one man, no other than Schoolmaster Krown, who was almost breathless from his hurried ride from Warmbrunn, where he had been to give notice of the attack, and to ask that aid be sent immediately. Behind him were his children and foster-children, who felt safe where he was, and were deeply interested in the stirring affair.

"Back! back, my brethren!" he said, earnestly. "Listen to me, if you do not wish to

bring trouble upon yourselves. In less than ten minutes there will be a company of cavalry here to defend the property of Herr Lauder-mann. It is not too late for you to save yourselves, if you will now fly to your homes; but every minute adds to your danger. I am telling you the exact truth; and I, your true friend and the teacher of your children, tell you this to warn you, and to keep you from imprisonment, wounds, and death; and if you care nothing for yourselves, think of the distress that you are bringing upon your wives and children. In the name of the dear Saviour who died for us all, I implore you to leave here and go home."

"Stand back, Schoolmaster, if you don't wish to be run over, and yourself and your children to be killed," cried the leader. "We want no preaching here now, nor foolish threats of soldiers; we mean to break up the machinery that is taking the bread out of our mouths. Stand back, or your blood will be on your own head."

"Let them alone, Krown," said a sneering voice from the door of the spinning-room, that of Herr Ruckert; "don't cool their enthusiasm.

You don't understand this weaver element. Come in, come in, friends; there is plenty of room in here. Stand back, Schoolmaster, and let my guests come in. The tea-kettle, in the shape of a steam-engine, is bubbling over the fire, the safety-valve is in the right position for an explosion, and perhaps hundreds of weavers will bite the dust for this night's work. Come in! come in!"

"The spinning-master is not telling the truth!" yelled one of the men. "He is trying to frighten us away; we will destroy the steam-engine first, and then we will have nothing to fear. Forward, men, forward!"

Herr Krown could do nothing more, and he stepped back with the children, with the exception of Joseph, who had run into the engine-room, and was standing by the huge engine when the mob rushed in, meeting no opposition from Ruckert, who had been struck upon the forehead by a stone hurled by one of the men, and was lying senseless upon the floor of the spinning-room.

During Joseph's stay in the factory he had often watched the engineer as he put on and

off the steam, and he resolved to put his knowledge into practice; so, when the men crowded about the engine, uncertain where to commence the work of destruction, he, without being observed by them, drew the valve, and, with a shrill whistle, the steam poured forth, filling the room.

Knowing the malicious and revengeful nature of the spinning-master, and the dangerous power of the engine, they thought that it was about to explode, and fell over each other in their haste to leave the factory. They were not a moment too soon, for the steady gallop of horses' hoofs sounded in the distance, and a company of cavalry appeared, dashed up to the factory, and called a halt; and when they surrounded the factory quiet reigned within, where had been wild tumult.

Herr Krown had been quite as much frightened by the terrible noise made by the escaping steam as the weavers; so much, indeed, that he did not feel the shock of being thrown upon the stone floor by the terrified herd, and his children shared his terror. In vain Joseph assured them there was no danger, for, instead of being

imprisoned where it could do harm, it was escaping into the room where it was harmless; the noise it made was so frightful to the listeners, that they could not be satisfied until they were safely out of the factory.

Joseph and Helena were not willing to go without seeing their uncle, so, leaving the engine-room, they went to the spinning-room, where they found him motionless upon the floor, blood oozing from a deep cut on his forehead. He was so still that the children thought him dead, and seeing it was impossible to lift him, Joseph ran to ask Herr Krown to come.

No matter who it might be that needed help in trouble or affliction the heart of Herr Krown responded to the call, and far and near he was known and honored for his Christian compassion and good works. Therefore, he quickly responded, although Ruckert was an enemy, who never spoke a good word of him, and would have refused help had the cases been reversed and Schoolmaster Krown the injured one.

“Lenchen, I wish you and Fritz and Anna to go directly home, the mother will be terribly anxious about you,” said he.

“Unless you would rather have me go I would like to stay with uncle,” said Helena, “maybe I could be of some help.”

“Certainly, child, I only thought it would be painful to you, when you have not as yet recovered your strength;” and both hurried to the spinning-room, while Fritz and Anna went home.

During this conversation, torches carried by cavalymen were flaming through the factory and yard surrounding it, search being made for the weavers. More than a dozen, who were too intoxicated to escape, were found in and about the factory, and as many more in the cellar of Herr Laudermann’s dwelling, and all placed under arrest.

The noise made by the heavy footsteps, clattering swords and spurs, through the empty rooms of the dwelling, was heard by the two terrified ones hidden in the attic.

“Adolph, are you there?” inquired a subdued voice.

“Yes, father.”

It sounds as though soldiers have taken the place of the weavers.

"I hope so, father; I cannot bear this cramped position much longer, and the floor seems as hard as iron."

"Nothing could have saved us had they set the house on fire, as they threatened. But your poor mother and sister! My heart is tortured in regard to their fate. If all had been faithful like Ruckert things would not have come to this terrible pass."

"Oh, father, I thought we could not live through it; I expected each moment would be our last."

"Hark!" said Herr Laudermann, "some one is coming; be still until we see whether they are friends or enemies."

The footsteps came nearer, and paused at the door of the attic room, and by the light of the torch carried Herr Laudermann recognized the sheriff of Warmbrunn and three of his aids.

"I do not see a living creature about the house," remarked the sheriff, holding up the torch that the light might fall in the distant corners; and father and son crept from their place of concealment.

"You see what has come upon us, Herr

Sheriff," said the mill-owner; "but, worse than all, I am tortured with anxiety for my wife and my daughter. They ran out of the house, at my bidding, to conceal themselves in the garden, and I hope that they are safe, but I fear the worst. I hope that you will arrest Schoolmaster Krown, for he is to blame for all this trouble. He has been talking secretly to the weavers and stirring up their anger against me, and this is what it has led to; my property destroyed, and my wife and daughter driven from their home, and perhaps not among the living."

"You are mistaken in regard to Schoolmaster Krown," replied the sheriff. "He walked the six miles to Warmbrunn and back to give us warning; and he went again this evening when he found that the attack was to be made. Had it not been for him, your factory and machinery would have been destroyed. He is the good Samaritan who is even now binding up the wounds of his enemy, Spinning-master Ruckert."

The mill-owner was filled with surprise at hearing this; and when, a few minutes after, Joseph came from the factory, sent by Herr

Krown, to tell him that his wife and daughter were safe in the schoolhouse, his joy and gratitude knew no bounds, and he was deeply ashamed that he had fostered such an ill opinion of a noble man.

It was found that Herr Ruckert was fatally injured, though the physician from Reichenstein and Dr. Keller from Warmbrunn said that he might linger for several weeks.

He was faithfully attended by Lenchen and Joseph, and Schoolmaster Krown gave up to him all his hours out of school, not only in care for his bodily needs, but for the saving of his immortal soul. For more than two months he lingered, and in the still watches of the night Herr Krown read God's word to the repentant man, talked with him, prayed for him, and comforted him; and poor Ruckert died in peace, his robes made white in the blood of the Lamb, one over whom the angels rejoiced.

CHAPTER X.

MANY CHANGES.

THE death of Ruckert made a great impression upon the mill-owner; nothing having in his previous experience influenced his thoughts from money-getting to another and better way of living.

He knew the spinning-master to be a rough, godless, beer-drinking man; that he had become entirely changed by the power of the gospel and died in peace, was to him a powerful sermon upon the efficacy of that gospel. That Schoolmaster Krown was the one privileged to lead him to his Saviour, and the blissful assurance of life beyond the grave, turned his attention to the worth and value of a Christian friend and neighbor. This and the loss of his property set Herr Laudermann to realizing that "it is not all of life to live, nor all of death to die."

The treasures which he had spent the best years of his life accumulating had been taken from him, he longed to lay up treasures in

heaven where "moth corrupts not, nor thieves break through and steal."

He consulted Schoolmaster Krown in regard to his workmen, and that clear-sighted friend gave him counsel which changed enemies into friends. He longed for the peace which "passeth all understanding," and Schoolmaster Krown pointed out the path.

Joseph, too, in his simple piety was a great help to Herr Laudermann in the new life he was striving to lead; for, since the death of his uncle Ruckert, he had been a member of the mill-owner's family. He shared the studies of Adolph under the instruction of an experienced tutor, and, when not thus employed, was secretary for Herr Laudermann at a good salary, part of which was forwarded to his mother in Schellerhaus.

Lenchen was a competent spinner in the factory, remaining in the family of Herr Krown, where she received a good education, and part of her wages was sent to her mother, which, with the three hundred dollars in bank, was being saved for the purchase of a home for Frau Eckhardt.

Adolph, Joseph and Fritz, as they grew to manhood, served their apprenticeship in the army, according to German law; Adolph choosing a soldier's life, while the others returned to peaceful Reichenstein, where Fritz assisted his father in the school.

Thus ten years passed away from the time Ruckert had met his death, when two important events transpired which were a subject of interest, not only to the family of the mill-owner and that of the schoolmaster, but to the whole village of Reichenstein.

This was the marriage of Toska Laudermann to Joseph Eckhardt, and the other, that of the marriage of Helena Eckhardt to Fritz Krown, both upon the same day.

The old church of Reichenstein was decorated by order of Herr Laudermann for the occasion, and Frau Eckhardt was sent for to make a visit to both families, and be present at the weddings.

In the frequent visits which her children had made to Schellerhaus, she had rejoiced over their improvement, bodily and spiritual, giving thanks to God, who had protected them in their

struggle with the world; and the fact that now they were to be thus happily settled in life filled her with gratitude.

The school-children had a holiday that they might attend the weddings; and the girls, all robed in white, scattered fragrant flowers in the path of the brides as they walked up the path to the church.

It had been decided that all the wedding company should come from the church to the house of Schoolmaster Krown, as that was the home of three of the newly-married ones, Toska and her parents giving ready assent. So the wedding supper was enjoyed together; the table was beautifully decorated, the brides' cakes being marvels of the Berlin confectioner's art.

They had just finished, and had left the supper-room for the parlor, when they heard a familiar voice in the street:

"Blackberries! Blackberries! Juniper berries! Juniper berries! Fresh and sweet!"

"It is Bärenklein!" cried Joseph, his eyes beaming with pleasure; "I must go out and see him."

"Bring him in to supper, Joseph," said Herr Krown.

Helena was glad to hear the cry of the fruit-seller, and she hoped that he would accept the invitation.

"Come in, Bärenklein! come in!" said Joseph, from the porch. "You will see several of your old friends and neighbors, who will be glad to see you."

"But this is your and your sister's wedding-day, and you have other guests," objected Bärenklein; but Joseph noticed that he wore his holiday suit.

"Only a very few friends, Bärenklein, and they will be glad to see a friend of ours; besides, Herr Krown invites you to come in and take supper."

Bärenklein made no further objection, and, after being kindly spoken to by the guests, he was taken by Fritz to the supper-room, where he enjoyed many delicacies to which he was unaccustomed; but more than all he appreciated the kindness of Joseph and Lenchen, the mountain children, whom he had known all their lives, and had given them of his berries whenever opportunity afforded.

After supper he remained a little while in the

parlor, all being kind to the little man; and, when he arose to leave, he asked Joseph to come to the porch with him.

“I wish to give you and Lenchen a basket of my best berries,” said he; “I picked them from the mountains on purpose to give you; they are fresh and sweet, and they are all that I have to give, except my very best wishes for your happiness.”

“It is good and kind in you, Bärenklein. I am much obliged to you, and I know that Lenchen will appreciate your kindness. I will get a basket for the berries.”

“Yes, Herr Joseph; but before you go I have something to tell you. On my way here I saw a man who could scarcely walk, he was so thin and weak and ill. He begged something of me, and, poor as I am, I could not refuse; I gave him two silver groschen, which was all that I had. He was so overcome that he had to sit down on a bank, and I sat down with him, and asked him to tell me how it was that he was in such need. He told me that he was a weaver, but that he had just served a ten years’ term in prison because he was a leader in an insurrec-

tion against the factory-owner, Herr Laudermann, and threw the stone which caused the death of your Uncle Ruckert. He could get no work after he was discharged from prison, and has wandered around, forlorn and miserable, his clothes in tatters and his feet almost on the ground. His only great longing is for the rest of the grave. All the time, dear Herr Joseph, that I was enjoying that good supper, I was thinking of the poor man. Now, for what am I telling you this? That you, dear bridegroom, may celebrate your marriage, and express your gratitude to God who has so blessed you, by doing the Christian kindness of helping this poor creature."

"I will, Bärenklein, I will," said Joseph, deeply touched; "only tell me where I can find him."

"When I parted from him I told him to go to the village inn, and to use one of the silver groschen in providing himself with a substantial meal. He promised me to do so, and I am sure that you will find him there. Now you can get the basket for the berries, Herr Joseph."

It was brought and filled with the rich, ripe

berries; and then, satisfied that he had been able to make a bridal present, though an humble one, Bärenklein went cheerily on his way back to Schellerhaus.

Joseph returned to the parlor, taking Bärenklein's gift to Lenchen, and, while the guests were engaged in conversation, he asked Schoolmaster Krown to come outside. He told him of the poor man at the inn, and in a few minutes Herr Krown was on his errand of mercy.

When he reached the place he found the one of whom he was in search seated by himself in a corner of the garden which surrounded three sides of the inn. He had just finished supper, the only substantial meal that he had enjoyed for many a day.

"Can this be Homier?" exclaimed Herr Krown, in astonishment, as he gazed upon the white-haired man before him.

"Yes, that is my name," replied the other, a flush of shame rising to his pale face.

"I don't wish to alarm or to humiliate you," said the schoolmaster, kindly; "my only aim is to help you if I can. We will not trouble ourselves about the past; only the present and the

future is what should interest us. It is very evident that you have suffered, and it is the duty of every one to help you to health and happiness. Here is one friend who welcomes you back to your old home, and no doubt you will find many more."

"But I took a man's life; I was the one who threw the stone that caused Ruckert's death. That thought is never out of my mind; it has robbed me of all that makes life worth living, a clear conscience. Oh! if that miserable night were to be lived over, how differently I would act! The remorse has made me old and gray before my time. The burden of my sin crushes me to the earth; I can never hold up my head among those who once knew me."

"Our Saviour tells us that though our sins be as scarlet they shall be made white as wool; our God turns no penitent away; dare weak man hold enmity against his neighbor?"

"Had I heeded your counsel and given up my miserable traffic of beer-selling, robbing my neighbors of the money which should have gone to the support of their families, it would not perhaps have been necessary for you to plead

with us not to attack the machinery. We were maddened by strong drink, and would not listen to reason."

"Still recalling the past," said the schoolmaster; "come, now, Homier, you have perhaps years of life before you in which you can redeem all that has gone. But you are worn out and faint; I will leave you now and will see you to-morrow; but before going will give orders to the innkeeper to give you a comfortable bed and good meals, and I will pay for all; what you must do is to eat and sleep, and throw all anxiety for the past aside; it can do no good to you nor any one to brood over what cannot be helped. Put all cares from you by casting them upon the Saviour, which he asks us, nay pleads with us to do. There is no friend like him; his comfort never fails."

When Herr Krown returned to his home, the wedding company listened with deep interest to the story of Homier, and the next morning Joseph accompanied him back to the inn to see him.

Joseph had spoken to Toska in regard to giving the poor man a home with them, and

she and her parents highly approved of it. It had been decided months before that Joseph and Toska should have their home in the mill-owner's dwelling, as Herr Laudermann had arranged to give up all charge of the factory into the hands of Joseph, and retire from business, he and Frau Laudermann to reside in their handsome dwelling in Berlin.

If anything could have cheered the oppressed heart of Homier this offer would have done so; he was deeply grateful, and promised to be as useful as was possible to him.

But suddenly his face clouded, and he seemed lost in thought.

"What is it, Homier; what troubles you?" said Joseph.

"Bärenklein told me that your wife is the daughter of Herr Laudermann; does she know that I am Homier, who helped to plunder her father's house, and would have burned it to the ground had it not been for Frau Krown? Will she have as a servant a man who caused the death of poor Ruckert?"

"Yes; my Toska is a Christian. she forgives as she hopes to be forgiven."

“Then I will go to your good home, and God helping me, will be faithful to your interests; so far as in me lies I will try to atone for the past.”

CHAPTER XI.

THE ODER RIVER.

HOMIER left the inn that day and was given a comfortable room in the home which ten years before he had helped to destroy, and as his strength returned, he became invaluable upon the place. He cared for the garden, orchards, and poultry; was, in truth, a trusty and trusted care-taker of the house and grounds.

He seldom alluded to his early life, and a deep sadness rested upon him, yet he was not unhappy. He seemed though in the world not to be of it, and his sole aim was to do all he could for the good of his fellow-men while permitted to remain upon earth.

Through the influence of Herr Krown his thoughts had been turned to the saving of his immortal soul, and in the old church of Reichenstein he had been brought into the visible fold, a meek and lowly follower of Jesus.

The pastor valued his helpfulness in the

community, and Schoolmaster Krown, who was organist, considered him the best singer in the choir. All who knew him had faith in his sincerity, and he was honored and esteemed, not only by the three families with which he was closely connected, but by the whole neighborhood.

One day he was grafting trees in Schoolmaster Krown's garden, and thinking himself alone, he sighed deeply. Herr Krown, who happened to be near by, halted, and spoke kindly.

"You sigh, Homier," said he, "what is it that troubles you?"

"Oh, there is much to trouble me, Herr Schoolmaster; my conscience will not let me rest."

"But, Homier, you live at peace with God and man."

"I know it, but I have no temptation to do otherwise; what was done in the past can never be undone. Look at this plum tree, Herr Schoolmaster, see this deformity of the trunk, which can never be remedied. So it is with my life, nothing can make it right. I caused the death of poor Ruckert; that thought will

not leave me. The Bible says: 'Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed.' If I had my just deserts I would not now be among the living."

"Poor Homier, you have deeply repented of that, and God never turns a penitent away. You do all you can for Jesus."

"How can I when he is no longer upon earth?"

"What you do to the most humble of Christ's brethren you do unto him. In your faithful care and pious influence over Joseph's little son, and Fritz's little daughter, you are doing work for Jesus."

"But if I could do some good deed; if I could save the life of several persons, or even one, it would go far toward making me atone for the death of Ruckert."

"To preserve people, particularly little ones, from injury is not less a merit than to free them from danger," said the schoolmaster; "cheer up, Homier, you fill your place well in the world, Joseph's and Fritz's family would not know how to do without you;" and with these words he passed on.

At the same time that Joseph and Toska took possession of their home, Fritz and Helena went to theirs, which was a small farm beyond the village of Reichenstein, lying in a valley, and principally devoted to the raising of flowers. Here they lived a contented, peaceful life, varied by visits to and from Frau Eckhardt, Joseph and Toska, and Father Krown and his family.

One afternoon in midsummer, Toska, with her little Adolph, went to take tea with Fritz and Helena.

It had been raining violently at times for several days and nights, but that afternoon the sun was shining brightly when Toska left home, but the sky had again clouded, and there was a prospect of more rain.

She found Helena and Frau Eckhardt, who had come that morning from Schellerhaus for a few days' visit, putting up flower-seeds in little packets, and she sat down in her cheery, social way to help them, the two children being company for each other, and amused with Ulrica's toys.

"I am so glad that you came," said Helena,

cordially; "mother and I were wishing for you."

"And for Joseph," said Fritz, coming in to welcome her, and overhearing the words of his wife. "Isn't he coming?"

"Yes, he will be here presently; he has gone to examine the high-water mark of the Oder. The terrible rains which we have had for several days fill him with anxiety. He thinks that more falls there will be an overflow of the river."

"He is not alone in his anxiety," said Fritz; "all the people in Reichenstein are more or less troubled. Thank our heavenly Father, we are in a safe place, for within the memory of the oldest inhabitant the inundation has never reached this spot; yet we will watch the result with anxiety on account of others."

"Homier is of a different opinion," said Toska; "he firmly believes that there will be a greater overflow than ever before, and like a second Noah, he has been constructing an ark, in the shape of a float, out of the pieces of lumber that he could find upon the place. Joseph smiles, but does not interfere, for he knows that it will be an easy matter to knock it to

pieces if the wood is ever needed for something else."

"We have thought for some time that Homier is not altogether in his right mind, Toska. Have you and Joseph noticed that he seems to be even more sad and preoccupied than usual?"

"Yes, his thoughts seem to be far away from earth. He never smiles, yet he is gentle and kind to all; but only our little Adolph has power to cheer him."

"Hark!" said Fritz, his head bent in the attitude of listening, "I hear the storm-signal from the church; I must go and see what it means. The poor people are not only in fear of loss of property, but of their lives. If our Chamber of Deputies had spent one-hundredth part of the millions of dollars which were spent upon the Turko-Russian dispute, a strong dam could have been built, which would have prevented an overflow for all time; and if one-half of the million soldiers had laid down musket and sword, and had taken up pick and shovel, the work could have been done in one autumn."

"You are right," said Toska. "This unchristian work of war, and the keeping of such an

immense standing army, takes the money and labor which should be used for the improvement of our beloved Fatherland, and——”

She said no more, for at that instant a stream of water glided under the door, and made its way to the distant corners of the room.

“May God protect us!” cried Fritz, as, with a face pale with anxiety, he sprang to the door. “The Oder has overflowed its banks, and has reached even here!”

CHAPTER XII.

RETURN HOME.

THERE was great cause for fear and anxiety, for the volume of water was growing broader and deeper, and the first floor of the dwelling was quickly covered.

Toska and Helena had grasped their children at the first sight of the water, and had retreated to the steps which led to the second floor. Step by step they were compelled to ascend, while Fritz collected bread and other food, lamp and matches, and all that they would be likely to need in their enforced seclusion.

The women had taken positions in a corner where there was no window, that they might not see the roaring flood, Fritz keeping his anxiety to himself, that they might not be more alarmed than could be helped.

His house was strong enough to withstand the wind-storms that had visited the valley, but it had never been called upon to battle with an overflow of the Oder, and he dreaded the consequences.

He stood by the window which looked towards the church-tower, and thought of the people of Reichenstein, who were in terror and danger.

"No one is coming to our assistance," said Helena. "Surely father will think of us, and of the danger that we are in."

"How could any one come?" questioned Toska. "There is not a boat in the village that I know of. And Joseph, where is he?" And she clasped her hands in anguish.

"Don't be distressed about him, Toska. He is on horseback, and no doubt got to a place of safety," said Fritz.

"Listen to the signal from the church-tower; how terribly dreary it sounds!" said Helena, with pale lips and tear-dimmed eyes.

"It is too late for us; no one can help us now," answered Toska.

Fritz was walking back and forth the length of the apartment, his heart lifted up to God in prayer, for he felt that only God's interposition could preserve them from a watery grave.

"Fritz," said Helena, "it seems to me that the wall is leaning. Is it only fancy?"

A thrill of horror went through the heart of her husband at these words, for he, too, had noticed it, and her remark confirmed his fears.

At that moment there was a tap upon the shutter, and a well-known voice asked, "Who is here?"

Fritz ran to the window and opened it, and there was Homier on his float, which he had fastened by a rope to the house.

"Thank heaven that you are all safe!" said he, glancing in. "I have put this short ladder against the sill, and all of you must come down as quickly as possible. I can feel the house moving upon its foundations. Frau Toska and her boy must come first; then all the others quickly.

Helena held little Adolph while Fritz assisted Toska through the window and down the ladder, and when she was safely seated upon the float the little one was passed down to her.

"Now, Frau Helena," said Homier, "come quickly; then Frau Eckhardt. Please waste no moment."

"Let mother come first, good Homier, and she will take little Ulrica, while I descend;"

and Helena drew the terror-stricken woman to the window, she and Fritz helping her carefully to the raft.

The little girl was next passed down, quickly followed by Helena, and Fritz was about to step through the window when Homier mounted the ladder and prevented him.

“Let me in through the window, Herr Fritz, then, after you reach the float, I will draw the ladder up, and you must push away.”

“But you are going with us,” cried Fritz, in astonishment, “we will not leave you here to perish.”

“Only let me through the window, I will tell you then what I mean; I ask this for the good of all.”

Fritz saw there was no time to waste in controversy; he stepped back, and Homier came in.

“Now, go down the ladder, and when you are safe upon the float I will untie the rope that holds it. Hurry, the house is trembling from roof to foundation.”

Fritz stepped quickly through the window, and the moment he was on the float Homier drew up the ladder and untied the rope.

"Now, push off!" cried he, pointing to the spot where the oars were placed, "and may God be with you and keep you."

"But, Homier, we cannot, will not go without you," cried Toska and the others, in a breath.

"The float will not bear any more, my added weight would endanger you all."

"I will not save my life at the expense of yours," said Fritz; "you are saving the lives of my wife and child, if one must remain in the house, that one must not be their deliverer;" and he rose to his full height and grasped the window sill.

"Herr Fritz, my friend, do not deprive me of the fulfilment of my one longing, that of saving life in return for the one I destroyed. Oh! friends, have mercy upon me, and grant this, my earnest prayer. Through the grace of God let me be your deliverer."

"We will," replied Fritz, deeply moved; "but, Homier, you must try to save yourself, or your sacrifice will be of no avail. Suicide will not atone."

"I will, I will, indeed; I have no wish to destroy the life which God has given me. I

am a good swimmer, and will provide myself with floating materials when I find there is danger in the house. Now, push off; and may God protect you."

"And take our thanks for your great goodness to us, dear Homier," said Toska, tearfully, "we owe our lives and the lives of our little ones to you."

"And may God watch over you and bring you safely to us!" cried Helena, as the float pushed off.

"Aim for the hill upon which the church stands," called Homier. "If there be a place of safety, that is it."

"I will return for you if the float holds together," said Fritz. "It is only this hope that makes me willing to leave you."

"Good, very good; but run no risks for me. You are young, and have a long and useful life before you. You are a husband and a father, and have loving and beloved parents. There are many who would grieve for your death; there is not one to shed a tear for me."

The float pushed off, and Homier watched it from the open window.

“Dear Saviour,” prayed he, dropping upon his knees, “thou who hast said to the dying thief at thy side, ‘This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise,’ save my life if it be thy will; if not, take me to dwell forever with thee. My prayer has been answered: thou hast given me the blessed privilege of delivering my fellow-creatures from death.”

The float in the meantime sped safely over the water, and reached the elevation upon which stood the church of Reichenstein. Close to the edge of the water were Schoolmaster Krown and his wife, and as each one landed they clasped them in their arms with tears of joy.

“Thank God for this great deliverance!” said Herr Krown. “Our anxiety knew no bounds when we saw your house in the midst of the river. We could see no chance for your lives; we could only hope and pray, and God mercifully answered our prayers. But who and where is he who provided for you in this time of calamity?”

“Homier was our good angel, and we could not persuade him to come with us, because he thought that the float would not bear the weight

of so many. But I have promised to go back for him; and you will help me, father, to get the women and children off the float, that I may keep my word to him," said Fritz.

Helena looked anxiously at her father-in-law, almost hoping that he would persuade Fritz not to run such a risk, for she was terribly weak and nervous, and believed that he was going to his death.

But the schoolmaster saw only one way, and that the right way.

"An honest man keeps his promise," said he. "Fritz must go; but one man cannot row against the stream; I will go with him; so hurry now into the church for shelter, and we will go."

"Oh, dear Father Krown," said Toska, "do you know anything of my husband? He had not reached home when Homier left."

"I have not seen or heard of him," replied the schoolmaster, "but you may be sure that he is where there is the most need of him. Do not grieve. Our heavenly Father will watch over him in this time of terror and anxiety. Come now, my son, let us push off, and save poor Homier if we can."

The women would have implored the father and son not to risk their lives, but they knew it would be of no use, so they gave what help they could to push the float from shore, but the moment the attempt was made to row against the angry flood the float turned about and threw both men into the water.

Terrified screams arose from the lips of the women, and they rushed to the water's edge, hoping to render assistance. Father and son were good swimmers and they were soon upon the shore, and not a moment too soon, for the frail float quickly followed and was dashed to pieces, the timbers floating down the stream.

"May God have pity upon Homier and save him, if it be his will," said Schoolmaster Krown, with tears in his kind eyes.

"You must have dry clothes, you will both take your death," said Frau Krown.

"If we can get to the school-house we will be all right," replied Herr Krown, "it stands upon nearly as high ground as the church, and it may be the water has not reached the first floor."

"I will go with you, father, I can be of no help here," said Fritz.

The others sat down upon the church-steps and looked toward the house where Homier was calmly awaiting death, if it be that he was to die.

They were not alone, many others of the terror-stricken villagers had fled to the church for safety, and cattle and horses swam there, and were contentedly cropping grass in the large enclosure about the church.

The schoolmaster and Fritz remained some time away, for they moved most of the furniture to the second floor, and searched for what provisions were on hand, and providing themselves with dry clothing and other needed things, they managed to return without having the packages dampened. They also brought with them the key of the church, and unlocking the door all entered, glad of such a place of refuge. Herr Krown lighted the lamps, which rendered all, especially the children, more cheerful.

Toska's anxiety for the fate of Joseph was so great that she could take no comfort in their place of shelter; she had begun to despair of ever seeing him, when she heard his voice outside the church, and her heart thrilled with joy.

He came in, and his gratitude to Homier could not be expressed when he found his loved ones safe.

"I knew you would be wet, so brought three suits of dry clothing; come with us, Joseph, to the basement, and we will soon be more comfortable," said Fritz.

Taking one of the lamps he had brought from home, Herr Krown led the way, and when their wet clothing was replaced by dry garments, the three men went to the tower to see if the house where Homier was awaiting deliverance or death was still in view.

"If it keeps together he is safe," said Fritz, "and he promised me to try to save himself if it went to pieces; pray God that he may be spared."

"Look at that point where we see a light," exclaimed Herr Krown, "see, Fritz, that is surely your house, and Homier is seated near the window with a lamp in one hand and a book in the other."

"It is his hymn-book," said Joseph, "he carries it about with him all the time, and sings from it in all his spare moments. Listen, he

is singing now;" and faintly across the water came the words: "A strong fortress is our God."

"His favorite hymn," said Joseph, softly.

The sound of the waters deadened the next line; they could not catch it, but the third line came to their ears tremulously sweet, "He freely helps in all our need." Then, with a dull crash, the house toppled and went over, the light was extinguished, and the voice of Homier was stilled.

A groan of anguish escaped the lips of the three men, and they pressed each other's hands in silence.

"If he has gone from earth, he has died the death of a Christian," said Herr Krown; "but I cannot help having a hope that we shall yet see him in the flesh."

"Nothing on earth could give me greater pleasure," said Joseph. "We would miss him terribly, but our loss would indeed be his gain."

"It would be better to say nothing to the others of what we witnessed," said Fritz; "they are so unnerved that we will spare them all we can."

They descended to the body of the church, and getting the provisions which Fritz had brought on the float and which Schoolmaster Krown had brought from his house, they ate, sharing with others who were entirely unprovided for; and then beds were made for the little ones, who were soon in a deep sleep.

During the long hours of the sleepless night the villagers thought of the peaceful hours that they had enjoyed in their own homes, and for which they had not been sufficiently grateful. There was no one who did not grieve for some absent member of the family, who might be in great danger, or, perhaps, already numbered with the dead.

By noon of the next day the inundation had reached its height, and was beginning to recede; but two nights and a day had passed since the people sought refuge in the church, and the prospect was that it would be some time before they could return to their homes. They would have suffered the pangs of hunger had not several of the cows given a good supply of milk, which was a great boon, especially to the children.

When the water finally receded it left a scene of desolation. The once fertile fields were covered by a thick coat of mud; trees which were not uprooted were stripped of fruit and leaves; dwellings were destroyed, animals drowned, and the people in despair.

On the morning of the day in which they were to leave the church for their homes, Joseph and Toska were standing at the foot of the knoll, watching the floating timber and other things passing down the stream, when they heard Joseph's name called from the church-door, and they hurried in.

To their great joy, they found Homier, very pale, weak, and exhausted, but alive and well, and very grateful for his great deliverance from death.

He had strapped himself to a board when the house went over, and had floated about until the receding of the water had left him upon the shore some distance down the stream, from whence he had managed to walk to the church.

A bowl of hot bread and milk was given him, and what wraps the others could spare were

put about him; and when his garments were exchanged for the suit worn by Joseph on the night of the inundation, and which had been carefully dried by Toska, a comfortable bed was made for him, and he slept for many hours.

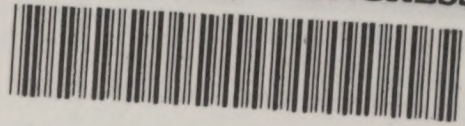
When all were about to leave the church he was awakened, and accompanied Joseph and Toska to the home which had been mercifully spared to them, softly singing as he walked:

“A strong fortress is our God.”





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